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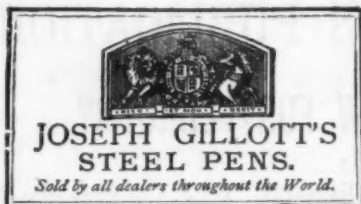
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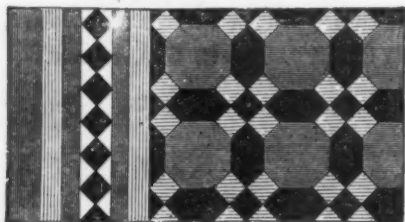
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BOOK II. THE CONFESSION OF DORIS.

CHAPTER III. BASIL AND I.

It was more easy to talk to Basil than to Nick. There was, I think, a more feminine vein, if I may say so, in Basil's nature. He had sense enough, with yet an inclination towards sensibility; and he was tolerant of nonsense—a girl's nonsense—when Nick would have been decidedly contemptuous. And Basil was appreciative of that sort of twilight between sense and nonsense, in which so many of us seem to live. He could understand that I did not mean quite all I said; that there was often jest in my earnestness, and earnestness in my jest. And he had a quick perception of the humorous. And that sort of faculty brings with it, I think, a great power of sympathy.

It would have been no good whatever my saying to Nick the things I said to Basil. Nick would only have scolded me; or have frowned and scowled, clenched his fists, and wanted to scold, or to punish someone else. In a quarrel it would be as well, perhaps, to have Nick on one's side. Otherwise, one might have a more agreeable companion.

He was a very good boy, however, was Nick; very staunch and straightforward. I should not like to say that he was clever or bright; yet it would not be fair to charge him with being stupid or dull. One thing—he was perfectly satisfied with himself. Whatever he did, or said, was

right to his thinking. I greatly envied him that condition of mind; clearly it made things about him so much more comfortable to him; and it enabled him to despise those who differed from himself.

I used to liken Nick to a horse in blinkers, seeing his own way perfectly, and proceeding directly upon it; but precluded from knowing much about the doings of others, or the objects upon either side of him. He couldn't understand why we did not all follow his lead; go where he did; do as he did. And he thought poorly of us because this was not possible to us.

"What had I to complain of?" Nick would demand. "Had I not food sufficient, and raiment, and a roof over my head?" He did not ask for more than that. He could not understand anyone asking for more. Why should I, of all people, ask for more? The only explanation he could think of was to the effect that I was a girl, and that girls were rather unaccountable creatures, not particularly gifted with reason; not knowing their own minds, if indeed it was certain that they possessed minds. He was of opinion that Mr. Leveridge was a very worthy gentleman; that Miss Leveridge was a very nice old lady; and that I ought to consider myself very fortunate that such excellent people had showed kindness to me.

I could not help studying and considering my brothers after this fashion—holding a sort of inquest upon them. We had been long separated, while I stayed with my aunts in Bath and they remained in London with my father. But we had parted as children—only knowing each other as children; that is to say, without much thought or understanding of each

other. We met upon altered terms. I was a woman, or nearly so. And time had told upon them; and perhaps trouble too. They were something more than boys now; young enough in many ways, no doubt, but rather old in others. Basil, whom I had left almost a baby—whom I had of old conspired with Nick to tease and depreciate—wore now a curiously grave expression, and spoke with a surprising air of wisdom and experience. But he was without Nick's confident, self-sufficient manner; to Basil it seemed probable that there were other rational opinions in the world beside his own, and two sides to almost every question. And he was less tall and handsome and robust than Nick. Basil was indeed very slight of figure, with a pale, thin face, lit up by very fine eyes; otherwise his features were ordinary enough. He almost looked as though he had outgrown his strength; for he stooped rather as he walked, and he was fond of crouching attitudes, curling himself up in easy-chairs, or bending over the fire. He was more of a student than a man of action. Yet he did not give himself dry, bookish airs. There was often a very merry light in his eyes, and he would talk pleasantly about all kinds of things. It was easy to forget now that he was younger than I was; certainly he was very much wiser. He had thought so much. To me it was oftentimes quite impossible to think.

That I loved my brothers I need hardly say. My love for them, indeed, was so much a matter of course that I have a difficulty in speaking of it. I suppose family affection has always about it something mysterious, inscrutable, inexplicable; it is so much part of oneself, of one's nature, that there is no reasoning upon it, or discussing its why or its wherefore. It had been as a settled conclusion with me, from my first intelligent moment, that I loved Nick and Basil, that I should always love them, and that they would love me. A cessation of that state of feeling was not conceivable. But, of course, the affection that united us did not hinder certain occasional divisions amongst us. We squabbled in our nursery times; now I sided with Nick against Basil; now with Basil against Nick; and now I stood alone, defying their opposition, joint or single. And as we grew up it was inevitable that differences of opinion should arise between us upon various topics. Nor could I resist sitting in judgment as it were upon my

brothers; weighing their merits or detecting their differences, and musing over their characters. Yet thus doing I could not charge myself with unsisterly conduct, or with departure from that original, natural position of affection for them I had occupied from my early entrance into the world. And so I took for granted that, as I did to them, so they did to me, and that they thought of me much after the manner of my thinking of them. I am certain that it never occurred to any one of us to charge the others with lack of affection or what is called "family feeling."

I had been talking to Basil, complaining of my life at Miss Leveridge's. He had listened to me with his usual patience, not looking at me as I spoke, yet appearing to consider attentively all I said.

"But you do not really mean that you are miserable? That is an exaggeration surely."

"I am not miserable as those who are destitute and starving are miserable, if you mean that. But I am miserable as a caged bird is miserable; the poor thing may be well fed and cared for, yet for all that it is tempted to beat itself to death against the bars of its prison. What is a girl like me to do, Basil, when she feels miserable?"

"Well, she can do various things. She can cry, for one thing."

"You are laughing at me. I have cried for one thing."

"Poor Doris! But you felt the better for it. Of course you did. Crying is a great privilege, which women should prize. A man may not cry; he is scarcely permitted even to complain."

"But besides crying and complaining, Basil, what am I to do?"

"Well, you can hope."

"I have hoped. I do hope; but nothing has come of it yet."

"But something may—something will—only hope mustn't be hurried. Change will come to you, as to all of us. May come, perhaps, sooner than you expect."

"What does that mean?"

"It has no special meaning. It is only a commonplace. Are you ambitious, Doris?"

"I don't know. I have no grand views, I cannot see that I have any great aims in life. I want only to live as happily as I can. I am not clever."

"You are clever enough, I think. It seems to me that you are cleverer than

most girls. But it is not perhaps a question of cleverness; at least there must be feeling behind the cleverness, forcing it into action."

"But what am I to do, Basil? What am I to do? You see we come back to that."

"It so much depends upon ourselves. You want success, prosperity, upon easy terms. Well, that is possible to you. You are a woman; marry a rich husband."

"A rich husband! That is easily said. Where is he to be found?"

"Well, I think he is already found."

"You mean ——?"

"Yes, I mean the person you think I mean."

I could not speak for a moment, and I felt that my cheeks were very red.

"Well?" and Basil looked at me with eyes that were rather curious and rather laughing, and yet anxious too.

"Mr. Leveridge?" I asked, though perhaps I had no need to ask.

"Yes, Mr. Leveridge."

"But, Basil, he is old, he is very ugly."

"But, Doris, he is rich, and he loves you."

"You are sure he loves me?"

"Are not you sure he loves you?"

"But, Basil, you would not wish me to marry Mr. Leveridge."

"It is not a question of what I wish or do not wish. You seek to change your way of life. Well, there is a way open to you. Marry Mr. Leveridge."

"Basil, I could not marry Mr. Leveridge."

"You have quite decided?"

"He has been very kind, he has been too kind. I owe him too much gratitude. I can never love him."

"Perhaps he does not ask or hope for your love. Perhaps he demands only permission to love you."

"Yes, to love me because I am like mamma. I don't care to be loved for such a reason as that."

"One reason is almost as good as another, if love results."

"But such love as that could not last. The foundation is too fanciful. Some day he would wake to the discovery that I was not really so much like mamma as he had believed me to be. And then his love would depart, and he would despise me, almost as much as I should despise myself."

"I think not. Love may be won by one means and retained by another. Say

he loves you in the beginning because of your likeness to our mother, whom he loved, it seems, a score of years ago. Well, surely in the end he would learn to love you for your own sake."

"Basil, I could never marry Mr. Leveridge. At least I don't think I could. No, no. I am sure I couldn't."

"May I count it as a settled thing?"

"Basil, if you were me, would you marry Mr. Leveridge?"

"My dear, if I were you, I would rather starve than marry Mr. Leveridge." He laughed quaintly; then he stooped down and kissed me. "But I am not ambitious, you see. I am not miserable; at least not particularly so. I don't look to meet with good fortune very suddenly—to win prosperity with a rush."

"What are you doing now, Basil?"

"For my living, you mean? Well, I am earning bread and cheese. Not much more than that; and I am obliged to go, as you see, with rather threadbare clothes. I write in Mr. Grisdale's new paper, *The Wacery*. And I sit next Uncle Junius—Mr. Junius Grisdale, I should say—who, as you know, plays the French horn, and I play the flute, in the orchestra of Sadler's Wells Theatre."

"That sounds humble."

"It is humble. Yet it serves my turn. I live by it."

"I'm afraid I couldn't be content with that. Even if I could play the flute—and I can't. What does Nick think of it?"

"Nick thinks it low—decidedly low; Nick, who is a clerk in a bank at the East-end. The other night he sat in the pit—quite close to me—I could have touched him. He came with an order I had obtained for him. But he would not speak to me. He ignored me. He was a patron of the drama! I was one of the performers."

"Sometimes I think I should like to be an actress."

"For the money you would earn? The weekly salary?"

"Well, yes. I could only do it to earn money."

"Ah! It would be better to do it because you felt something within you impelling you; because you couldn't help doing it; because you had put your whole heart and soul in it; because it seemed to you the finest, noblest, grandest thing in the world to do."

"I don't think I could feel about it like that."

"Perhaps not. It may involve a touch

of genius to be able to think about it like that."

"I haven't that touch of genius."

"Perhaps not."

"And yet it is not indispensable to success?"

"There may be success without genius, of course; indeed there is a great deal of success which is quite independent of genius. And sometimes genius doesn't prevent the occurrence of failure."

"How could I become an actress, Basil?"

"Well, you would have to learn the business; for, after all, it is a business; and not a very easy one, to my thinking. But there are masters and teachers of the craft who would instruct and prepare you, if you were in earnest, or only half in earnest. There is Mr. Toomer Hooton, for instance."

I had not heard his name before. Basil now told me, how that he met Mr. Toomer Hooton in the Bench—when poor papa was a prisoner there—that he was a professor of elocution, and prepared pupils for the stage. Basil, it appeared had, after a long interval, again encountered Mr. Toomer Hooton, whom fortune had of late been treating with some kindness.

"I think I should like it, Basil."

"My dear, I don't think you would."

"But surely it would be better than marrying Mr. Leveridge?"

"But that is not the only alternative. We have been talking at random, Doris. We may even be doing injustice to Mr. Leveridge." He was speaking now in a more serious tone. "We were wrong perhaps—I was wrong in any case—to jest upon such a subject. I have, in truth, the greatest respect for Mr. Leveridge. He has been to us a kind and good and true friend."

"I own it," I said. "But if he asks me to be his wife, it will be very trying to me, Basil."

"Well, well, perhaps he doesn't mean to ask you; or he will not, if he reads objection in your face. Men may love and yet hold their tongues, I suppose. Sometimes love is a secret that is never told. Even death does not disclose it; it goes to the grave unrevealed, locked up in a heart that has ceased to beat for ever."

I had never heard him speak so earnestly before. He went on in a calmer fashion.

"I should be sorry if he felt his disappointment very gravely, as he would, assuredly. And yet it is impossible for

me to wish success to his suit—if it is to be called a suit. There will be little sympathy in store for him, anyhow or anywhere. He will be laughed at perhaps, if people come to hear of it. And no doubt it is difficult to think of romance and sentiment in association with such a man. And yet, poor old fellow, I can't but pity him. And he is famous in his way, you know, Doris; really a great artist. We must deal as tenderly with him as we may. Spare him as much as you can, Doris, should he speak to you of his love—promise me that. Be gentle with him. Don't, for heaven's sake, wound him with ridicule. After all, a man's love is no slight thing—even though the man be of Mr. Leveridge's age, and possess his very strange looks."

"He is so very like Punch," I said with a laugh I could not resist. Basil smiled rather sadly.

"He is very like Punch. I thought so from the first moment I ever saw him. All the same, Doris, he is not made of wood."

CHAPTER IV. TITIAN AND VANDYCK.

I HAD other conversations with Basil, to much the same purport. For my sense of weariness and dreariness was not to be dismissed or repressed. I grew quite vexed by the sight of Miss Leveridge's meek, sleek, white rabbit face. Her feeble, timid, nerveless airs, irritated me. I longed almost to slap her, just to see if she could not be stimulated into some show of animation and revolt. And I yearned to lead another sort of life, for change of scene. I felt stifled in Powis-place, weighed down by its stillness, its dullness, its monotony. I longed for liberty, activity. I wanted to get on—as men get on—by energy and movement of mind and body.

Mr. Leveridge encouraged me to continue my painting, and spoke kindly of the progress I had made; but indeed, he never spoke to me otherwise than kindly upon any subject. He aided me in my studies. It was due to his agency that I obtained admission as a student to the National Gallery. Perhaps he thought the change might benefit by amusing me, for he must have known that unrelieved association with his sister was too tedious to be long endured. My pretensions as an artist he did not rate highly, I feel assured. But, of course, he was unable to accompany me to the Gallery upon every occasion. Should I be afraid, he asked, to go there alone, to

stay there alone? Certainly not! What was there to fear? "You are not timid, I know," he said with a smile. And he seemed to imply that I might even be fairly described as bold.

"Not but what," he added, "your mother was a very delicate, shrinking woman, pallid and fragile, and bending like a lily in a storm. And you have grown to be like your mother—in some things, not in all. Basil is more like her about the eyes; and he reminds me of her in his looks and ways at times. And yet Basil is plain to be the son of so beautiful a mother. For poor Phillis was very beautiful."

It was at the National Gallery I first met M. Paul Riel.

He was engaged upon a large copy of the Bacchus and Ariadne of Titian. He worked leisurely, as it seemed, in a calm, cool, almost uninterested way, and yet he really made very rapid progress. He appeared to know exactly what to do, and when to leave off. I was much struck by the vigour, and the spirit, and the certainty of his method of execution. From glancing now and then, I took to observing him more and more intently, until I found myself quite absorbed in studying the quick growth of the picture under his hands. He had secured an accurate outline—to this he had clearly devoted time and pains—but now he was plying his brushes with a sort of triumphant adroitness. I felt that I obtained a fuller enjoyment of the original, in seeing the gradual accomplishment of the copy. I had often before noted the beauty of the work; its poetic air of revelry; the harmony of its lines; the grace of its composition; the lovely lustre of its colour. I seemed to prize these in a more artistic spirit from seeing them, as it were, severally produced and conducted by the dexterous hand of the young painter I was to know presently as M. Riel. The picture had before affected me as a whole; but each portion of it now asserted its individual power to impress. The rich landscape with the distant sea, whereon is to be discerned the galley of the departing Theseus; the beautiful figure of the hapless Ariadne, shrinking timidly as the joyous Bacchus, returning from a sacrifice, with a train of nymphs, fauns, and satyrs, leaps from his chariot to address her. The drunken Silenus, crowned with vine-leaves, and laden with grapes, follows, riding upon an ass. Above is the constellation of the

golden crown, bestowed upon the princess as the bride of Bacchus.

The painter worked on. He did not or would not note my presence. Without doubt he was aware that I was watching him, for he was not wholly engrossed by his occupation. There was something even careless in his manner, as his brush wandered hither and thither apparently at random, but really with the firmest intention. His head rocked a little as though following the motions of his hand; and now and then his lips were drawn together, as though he were whistling idly.

I started when I found him speaking to me.

"Mademoiselle is an artist then?—Yes?"

I was too scared to answer. Yet his manner was most polite, and his voice very musical.

"But I need not ask. I can see for myself. The head of Gevartius—as it is called. Yes, it is a favourite study. Yes, and mademoiselle is engaged upon a very admirable copy in water-colours."

There was only a very slight trace of foreign accent in his speech, and his command of English was complete. He might even have passed for an Englishman, but for his care to articulate distinctly, and his habit of repeating the word "Yes"—now as a redundancy, and now interrogatively.

I felt that I had blushed, and was looking foolish. I scarcely knew what to say to him. I could not resent his addressing me, for I had almost brought that about by so persistently observing him, although hardly conscious of my own persistency; and then it had not occurred to me that he could be so fully aware of my presence.

"Yes," he said with a little laugh, "I have eyes at the back of my head."

It was as though he had power to read my thoughts.

"Mademoiselle was so kind as to contemplate my poor labours, and with interest. It was flattering to me. I tender my sincere homage and gratitude. And mademoiselle will pardon me that I took the liberty to speak to her. But—I could not refrain. Let my art—may I say our art?—be my excuse. And if I can be of service to mademoiselle, though it be only in the slightest degree—let her delight me by commanding me. I can paint—at least I can copy—it is my trade, my calling; it is almost the only thing I can do. I boast some experience. I am older, much older,

than mademoiselle—I shall be very glad and proud if I can help her, and if she will permit me to help her.”

This was very pleasantly spoken, and it pleased me the more for a certain steady composure and calmness that marked his manner. I felt that there was only politeness in his address to me, a desire to oblige; and that otherwise, there seemed to be but indifference towards me. I could not be sure that he even admired me; and—being young, and a woman—I perhaps searched his face for some look of that kind. In brief, he did not alarm me in any way, after my first feeling of perturbation, and I could not but forgive what seemed simply and kindly intended. Indeed, I thanked him for his offer of assistance, and explained to him, what scarcely needed to be explained, that I was no proficient; that I was compelled to proceed slowly; that I was conscious of my own faults and shortcomings. Viewing my Vandyck by the side of his Titian, I had small reason to be satisfied with my own performance.

“Yes, but you have been well taught,” he said. “Your papa or your professor—the little elderly gentleman who is here with you sometimes—he is not your papa? Ah, but he is a fine painter—a great man. I know of him. His carnations are worthy of Rubens, of Tintoret, nay, of Titian himself. Yes, under his instruction you will go far. You will little need assistance from me or from others. This is a fine Vandyck—the head has been ascribed to Rubens, but that is, I think, an error. It is commonly called Gevartius—another error. Vandyck died in 1641, when John Caspar Gevaerts, or Gevartius, the Flemish philosopher, was but forty-eight. This is the head of a man some twelve years older. A very noble head, with a touching pensive expression. A brave man who has thought and suffered—a gentleman—most picturesque. Observe his shapely features, his fine, gray, wavy hair, his broad, firm forehead, his lace frill resting upon his deep black dress, his gray moustache and pointed beard, his tender, dreaming, liquid blue eyes. Such a man should have a history. Yet no one has ever told it of him. He remains unknown. There is uncertainty about his name—dispute as to his identity. It is even thought that he may be but a Dutch burgher, Cornelius Vander Geest, an amateur of the fine arts, and a friend of Rubens. However, to have been the friend of Rubens in-

volves a certain distinction. You admire the picture? I sympathise with your admiration. You selected this to copy out of all the examples here? Well, that is the usual way with students. They copy this Vandyck, often, very often, too often, perhaps. They think it is easy to copy, and it looks easy, for it is simply painted, although by a master's hand. Yes, but to catch expression is very hard, and this work depends upon its expression. That is what really impresses you, and occupies you, and even haunts you, always, afterwards. For your copy, well, yes, it is of promise.”

I felt obliged to him for his sincerity in that he had refrained from awarding higher praise to my drawing. I was sensible of its many imperfections. I said as much.

“Ah, yes, you have wearied a little, and your task has troubled you. In such case you should rest from your work for a while, that you may return to it with freshened eyes, with restored powers. Yes, it is with the eyes we paint, as much as with our hands. When fatigue comes, or a sense of disappointment, it is time to rest. When you take a dislike to your work the fault is often in yourself, not in the picture. You leave it wrong, as you think. You return to it, it is right! The defect was in the painter, not in the poor picture. Now see, I may touch on your work? Yes? Ah, but it is a liberty I take; mademoiselle will never pardon me. But there, your hand has weakened and the colour has become confused. But there, with a fresh brush, it is already better, is it not?”

As he spoke he had with a few adroit strokes brought my drawing to look far more shapely and correct. And he had dismissed from it a certain crudeness of colouring, due to my unskilled system of art, which had, for the moment, discouraged my further progress. I thanked him sincerely for his assistance.

“Ah, mademoiselle, it is nothing. You overestimate my services. They are indeed, trifling. If gratitude be due to me—but, indeed, none is due—let it take the form of permitting me to serve mademoiselle again. I shall rejoice in the opportunity. But mademoiselle will soon have little need of my poor aid. I am no great artist, mademoiselle. But, of course, you have never thought so for one moment. I am a copyist only. I am skilled, so far, it is true. But there is nothing of

the divine gift about me. I am without imagination, invention, fancy. In art I am a mere mechanic, an artificer, a tradesman, a shopkeeper. I could paint portraits, possibly, if sitters came to me, but they do not. For the rest, I can paint only what is placed before me to paint, as, for instance, this Titian. It is a divine work, but the divinity is in the original not in the copy. I am to be hired to perform these offices, for so much. A few pounds and I copy this, that, anything, everything. This is for Mr. Plumer, the Honourable Mr. Plumer, a member of your Parliament House; a patrician and yet a demagogue, a combination that is privileged to exist in England only. Mademoiselle will pardon my frankness, my talkativeness. I have been led to say so much, to speak of myself. I scarce know why. It is due to mademoiselle's kindness and forbearance, upon which I have trespassed far too much. Adieu, mademoiselle. May I trouble you with my name? It is Paul Riel. Mademoiselle will soon forget it, very likely. If she remembers it but for ever so little, I shall be grateful."

"And my name is Doris Doubleday," I said. "I thank you very much for so kindly helping me to-day. Good-bye, M. Riel."

"Adieu, mademoiselle."

He looked as though he would have pronounced my name, if he could, and we parted.

FROM THE STATES.

AMERICAN newspapers, with their narrow columns of small type breaking out unexpectedly with startling lines in capitals, with their Websterian spelling, their odd phrases, and their lavish introduction of strange new words, are trying reading to unaccustomed English eyes. But the toil is well rewarded. We may learn something of our cousins from books; but, to understand them—to see them as they see themselves—it is to the newspapers of the day that we must go; and, while thus making ourselves really acquainted with America and the Americans, we are pretty sure to learn some things about ourselves and our own land, which were never dreamed of in our philosophy.

It is not generally known to Englishmen that Queen Victoria has invested the bulk of her savings in real estate in New York, and owns a handsome property on

Broadway. Nor are they possibly aware that we are so dissatisfied with the national coinage as to be ready to hail the establishment of the American dollar as the common currency unit, so that we may be brought into unity with the people of the United States. We fear that unity will not be furthered by the knowledge that Uncle Sam tolerates the existence of a Fenian Volunteer Corps, enrolled, not to fight, but to demoralise our gallant soldiers and sailors, and destroy our barracks; and allows Mr. O'Donovan Rossa to levy contributions in aid of a skirmishing fund for the equipment of men ready to sacrifice their lives in striking England a blow she shall feel and remember. Already, it is said, a hundred of these skulking heroes have left America to work us mischief. Fifty betook themselves to New South Wales, and, aided by a Yankee skipper, enabled the Fenians in durance there to escape and reach New York in time to assist at the production of Tullamore, or the Boys of '98, at the Bowery Theatre; the patriots being escorted to the theatre by the officers of the Irish Legion and Mutual Alliance Honour Guard. The other fifty have as yet made no sign, although their friends credit them with causing the explosion on board the Thunderer, by mixing dynamite with the coal supplied to the ironclad. When interviewed on the subject, O'Donovan Rossa neither denied nor admitted the impeachment, but smilingly observed, that the war committee was very well employed. It is well to know that profitless murder is still delightful to the Fenian mind. It is well to know, too, how admirably the British Government is served abroad. Our readers have heard of General Ignatieff's scheme for partitioning the Sultan's dominions. Well, that diplomatist's establishment contained a French governess, a handsome, gay, coquettish girl. To her did a shrewd young attaché of the British Embassy pay assiduous court, and often did he steam out with her into the Bosphorus, on board the yacht belonging to the British Government. Divining her admirer's purpose, the lady determined to make the most of her opportunity, and soon came to an understanding with him. Some say she demanded ten thousand pounds—whatever she asked she had; and, in return, handed the attaché the famous document which she contrived to abstract from the file of the Russian Legation. A special mes-

senger carried it to London, and photographic copies of it quickly reached the foreign ministers of France, Austria, and Germany. The principal actors in this diplomatic drama left Constantinople for Calcutta as man and wife; and when the story was told to Marshal McMahon, he exclaimed: "Faith, it was the Crimea over again! France hauling the English chestnuts out of the Turkish and Russian fire!"

After such a pretty bit of fiction it is unpleasant to become acquainted with the very ugly fact, that slavery still exists under the stars and stripes. Let not the friends of our ebony brothers be alarmed; the only slaves in America are white ones. By the law of North Carolina, all persons unable to maintain themselves are subjected to a certain term of imprisonment, and then put up at auction and sold to the highest bidder for twelve months, to be employed by him in any capacity he thinks fit. Last year, at a sale in Jones County, a Mrs. Nancy and her three children were knocked down to an illiterate negro, at the price of five and a half dollars a month; another white woman went to a black master at the same rate; a blind man, with a wife and large family, found a coloured owner for five dollars a month; while Alfred Davis, being afflicted with a cancer, went at a dollar less. A number of other unfortunates were sold to white farmers. The commissioners, under whose authority these auctions are held, being all of one political party, are, we read, particularly severe upon every-one of Democratic proclivities, but tender to a degree with the poor belonging to the Republican party—if eligible as a voter.

The mercy denied to poverty is wasted upon crime. Better steal than starve; better kill than steal. Said a lately-released murderer: "I never did a minute's work in the prison in the six years, and never took a mouthful of the prison food. I paid for all I got, and might have lived cheaper at Delmonico's." As he came out of Auburn prison, "his diamond studs sparkling in his shirt bosom," a crowd of sympathising admirers greeted the good-looking fellow who had killed his man—not in fair fight. Boys and girls, market-women and loafers of every degree, cheered him as he entered his hotel; and one Irish enthusiast, as he shook his hand, cried: "God bless ye, my boy! come wid me; there's nothing in my house too good for yeess!" A woman, found guilty of

murdering her husband, is tried again six months afterwards, acquitted, and set free. "Criminals," writes an indignant journalist, "who submit to the temporary inconvenience which is called 'being brought to justice,' are not to be pitied. They have killed men whom they hated, or have stolen money where they could, or have committed some other technically illegal act which they felt a strong impulse to commit. Thus they have fully gratified their desire, and achieved the ends they most earnestly sought. For this they pay the ridiculously small price of a few weeks' residence in a prison, and the subsequent notoriety of a public trial. The final result being that the jurors call them temporary lunatics; or the complaisant deputy-sheriff assists them to some foreign clime, where there are no extradition treaties to annoy them. Such men are to be called successful rather than miserable. If murderers were hanged, or those who steal millions were sent to the state prison, the fleeing felon caught by the police would indeed be a miserable man; but we do not manage things in that way." How things are managed is told in an official report upon the causes of the increase of crime in New York. Thieves and bad characters are habitually protected by the police-captains, who receive from them large sums of money; the detectives, for similar weighty reasons, stand between criminals and their punishment, and give them their constant and systematic aid; magistrates are elected who possess no legal knowledge; and prison officials prey upon the prisoners committed to their charge, one gaol being especially "a money-making machine for the sheriff."

It is a far cry from New York to San Francisco, but there would not seem to be much to choose between them. We had, for private reasons, hoped otherwise, and were delighted to find our favourite journal lauding 'Frisco "as one of the best-conducted of cities, blessed with an admirable government and a low rate of crime;" but a few hours later, opening a San Francisco newspaper, the first words we lighted upon were: "Although we have some of the best laws in the world for the repression of crime, nowhere is it more open. It would make your hair stand on end to witness one night's carnival in our fair city. Murder, manslaughter, and suicide are daily occurrences; gambling, in all its forms, abounds. Unlimited greed destroys the minds, the morals, and the

lives of our citizens." In another column we are told a rich man may do anything, and yet meet with tender consideration; a poor man must walk straight, or the felon's cell awaits him. A fancy young man embellishes silver spoons and "other jewelry," valued at eighteen thousand dollars. He is regarded as an aristocratic prisoner, and furnished with a room as nice, snug, and private as his own parlour. No charge is entered against him. He waits, like a gentleman, some chance to compromise and buy his way out without disgrace, that he may plunder somebody else. Another very respectable offender, married into a fine family, forges a cheque, gets the money, and is caught. He is detained in one of the nice parlours till the money is forthcoming to pave his way to liberty. San Francisco may well abound in rogues, for so lax are its prison regulations, that it is chronicled as something extraordinary that a noted bad character should be kept within the prison walls during the whole term of her sentence, former jailers having always let her out in the daytime! No such tenderness is displayed towards naughty Chinamen; they are ruthlessly despoiled of their pigtails for the benefit of the jailers, who sell the cherished appendages to the hairdressers, for conversion into "waterfalls" for the adornment of Californian belles. John is in very ill odour just now. Restaurant-keepers advertise that all Chinamen have been kicked out of their establishments; and a newspaper editor, threatened with an action for circulating a scandalous story, writes: "We never said it was true, and we are certain no jury will convict, as the article was published solely to prevent the employment of the heathen Chinese in respectable families."

If California's capital is badly ordered, that of treeless Nevada is in still worse case, being sadly afflicted with "Hoodlums," or modern Mohocks. The chief constable of Virginia lately told his men they must fill the house of correction with these white Sioux, "who, commencing with stoning Chinamen, proceeded to felonious assaults upon citizens, and culminated in murdering for the pleasure of killing; hunting their prey in packs, like wolves, equally cruel, but more cowardly than the brutes they imitate, leaving good citizens amazed and paralysed at their merciless doings, and wondering why they cannot be stamped out." Judge Lynch will probably take the Hoodlums in hand, if his legally-

appointed brethren continue to treat them with leniency. The latter can be severe enough sometimes, to judge from the punishment meted out to one Felix Montrose, a youth with long, luxuriant locks, and a dreamy orb, charged with disturbing the peace and quiet of a boarding-house, by playing a cornet at unseasonable times. The keeper of the house deposed that, in a week, she lost a dozen boarders, some of whom refused to pay, on the ground that they had not enjoyed the comforts of a home, according to bargain. One lodger swore the cornet-player's performance was sufficiently execrating to drive an ordinary man mad; another, that it led him to believe Montrose was training a choir of pups to sing centennial melodies; but he owned a man living in the next block would have no cause for complaint, provided he stuffed plenty of cotton in his ears. Pressed as to the quantity of cotton that would be required, he replied that an ordinary bale of New Orleans xx prime, might suffice for a couple of weeks, but if his ears were as large as those of his questioner—the counsel for the defence—it might take more. A witness who lived two blocks off deposed that, on hearing the noise one night, he got up to hunt for it, supposing it came from a cow he had lost some days before. This evidence was supplemented by a petition for the suppression of the musician, signed by three hundred and fifty property-owners living in the neighbourhood. The defendant called two witnesses. The first declared the music lulled him to sleep, but admitted his ear for music was not particularly good, and when counsel whistled the Beautiful Blue Danube, pronounced it to be Yankee Doodle. The second witness, who occupied a room adjoining that of the delinquent, swore that the cornet did not disturb him in the least. Asked by the court how long he had lived there, he replied: "I have never been kept awake at all, sir." As he persisted in ignoring the question put to him, he was fined ten dollars for contempt; the fine being remitted upon it being discovered he was deaf as a post or a restaurant waiter. Failing to controvert the evidence for the prosecution, the defence produced the instrument of torture, and tried to lay the responsibility on its defects. The court pronounced that Montrose had no right to use it, and "he was sent up for ninety days." He wished to take his cornet with

him, but, with a humane eye to the comfort of the prisoners, the court ruled otherwise.

Their ears may not be attuned to music, but, like the rest of their countrymen, the Virginians of Nevada like to have them tickled with tall talk, and the managers of their centennial rejoicings were careful to provide the indispensable poem and oration. The gentleman responsible for the latter had evidently profited by old father Taylor's advice to a speaker: "Get yourself chock full of your subject, and then knock the bung out, and let the ideas flow." He opened thus: "Mr. President and countrymen. I beg you to realise the sublime grandeur of this moment of time. Centuries clasp hands in our immediate presence. Time seals at this holy moment, as an accomplished fact, the grand experiment of our fathers. We who have carried in security the ark of the covenant of our fathers' faith, above the reach of the mad waves of foreign intrigue and domestic commotion, down to the eternal shores of the irrevocable past, now press with our firmer footsteps the golden coast of a new century of time. Time now stretches forth his hand to reverse the glass and shift the sands of centuries, and at this moment our gaze rests upon the beauteous dreamland of the future, radiant with the rainbow hues of peaceful promise, and behind us stretches far away the grand highway of our national progress. It winds amidst sweet valleys, and by silvery streams, each step of its course honoured by the deeds of heroes, and sanctified by the graves of martyrs. At its commencement point still gleam the beacons of our faith, flashing from the turrets of the temple of truth. In the soft light of their glow we behold the lilies of enduring love nodding in sweet holiness by the last resting-places of the just, and hiding with their merciful shadows the graves of the erring. Fame sounds her wildest trump of joy to-day. Hope spreads her proudest banner on the sky, and Faith inscribes anew thereon the maxims of Liberty: Man is capable of self-government. All men are free and equal!" An American writer, lamenting the lack of great authors in America, finds consolation in the fact that his country can boast ten orators to England's one. In the States, "distinguished speakers" are as common as remarkable men. A member of Congress who followed Mr. Cattlin's advice, and kept his mouth shut, would have

a bad time of it if he sought re-election. If he is unequal to speech-making, he must not let his constituents know it; and, thanks to the absurd privilege he enjoys of having a speech inserted in the official report before it has been delivered in the House, it is not difficult for a silent member to deceive his friends at home. When Bill Sloan, "a twelve-hundred-dollar Treasury clerk," was asked if he knew Judge Allen, who had made such a capital speech on the public expenditure, he replied: "Know him, yes, to my sorrow. I came to Washington with him after his election. The judge had a soft place. He was assigned a place on one or two committees, but never attended, his time being spent at a second-rate tavern playing euchre, at which he is an adept. One day he called upon me, and said: 'Bill, I am getting letters from my people, demanding I shall speak on the question of the acquisition of California. You must get me out of the scrape, by writing me a speech. Do it in splendid style, and I'll give you three hundred dollars.' At the end of a week he got the speech. Did he deliver it in the House? Not a bit of it. During the rush of business one day, he obtained permission to have his speech printed. Every day brought him congratulatory letters. He came to me, chatted over old times, and then the critter said: 'Bill, do you play euchre?' 'Occasionally.' 'Well, I owe you three hundred dollars, and will play you three straight games, whether it shall be doubled or wiped out.' The speech-making debt was wiped out. Now, you were talking about that national expenditure speech of his; that, my boy, is mine. The judge owes me three hundred dollars for it. He wants to euchre me out of the money, but I have told him to pay up, or I'll let all his constituents know the history of these speeches. I fancy he'll pay."

Strange are the exhibitions sometimes provided for the delectation of the American playgoer. An actor and actress were lately "linked in matrimonial manacles," before an admiring audience at a Toledo theatre, and the first marriage ever solemnized—well, that is scarcely the word—let us say, contracted, at Dearwood, took place on the boards of the theatre there, at the conclusion of the first piece. The curtain rose and discovered the members of the company ranged on each side of the stage; the centre being occupied by Mrs. McKelvey, attired in elegant evening

costume, and Mr. Morgan, "jauntily attired," as became a bridegroom. Judge Kingkendell officiated with grace and dignity, and then, "omitting the kiss, shook the hands of the pair, and the curtain fell." People who show such little respect for the holy state have no notion of taking one another for better or worse, till death doth them part, and naturally expect to be enabled to dissolve partnership when they grow tired of each other's company. It is true the law differs in different states; but that matters little, since lawyers advertise their readiness and ability to procure divorce, quietly, anywhere—"no pay till divorced;" and their services seem to be in demand, especially among the ladies. Of six wives who obtained divorces the same day in a Nevada circuit court, one was set free on account of her husband's cruelty; one by reason of his intemperance; and four because their worser halves "failed to provide." Wives disinclined to proceed to extremities, take the milder course of securing a licence to trade on their own responsibility. One lady sets forth in her petition for that privilege that her husband, being of a speculative, venturesome disposition, has lost all his means by unfortunate speculations and extravagances; but as he treats her well, excepting as regards finding means to support her and the children, she does not desire to be parted from him, but wishes to trade on her own account, and conduct a millinery and dress-making establishment, and a dry goods and liquor business, upon a cash capital of sixteen hundred dollars. Mrs. Irene Chatterton, advertising her intention of applying for a licence, shows even less fear of having too many irons in the fire, for she announces that she purposes buying and selling real estate and mining stocks, keeping a boarding-house, a boarding-school, and a fancy store, carrying on the millinery business, and trading in hardware. Mrs. Beckstoffs, of Virginia, Nevada, appears to have divorced herself without troubling the lawyers at all, for her deserted spouse advertises: "To whom it may concern. My wife, Arabella Beckstoffs, having left my bed and board, I hereby give notice, that if any other man will take charge of her, away from the aforesaid b. and b., I will cheerfully bear one half of all reasonable expenses for her maintenance, and will consider that I have a very good joke on Snyder."

The last sentence is a bit of slang, of which there is plenty in the mining states. At a meeting of an anti-slang club organised by the young ladies of San Francisco, one of the members, making use of the expression "awfully nice," and gently reminded that she was talking slang, retorted: "I wouldn't say anything if I were you; you told Sallie Sproggins, just now, to pull down her basque!" "No I didn't. Sallie will say I didn't; she won't go back on me!" Here the president intervened, by enquiring what was the object of the society? "To discourage slang," cried a dozen voices. "Kereect," said the president, "go on with the funeral!" Then a member rose to say she had been fined, but hadn't the stamps with her, but would settle, in the sweet by-and-by. "All right," said the president, "pay when you have the ducats." A young lady wished to know if a member could call her beau "just old splendid?" "You bet she can't," was the decision. Whereupon the querist moved that Miranda Pew come down with the dust, for having paid her lover the said compliment. This roused Miranda to remark: "If my beau was such an old hairpin as your fellow is, I wouldn't say it." The quarrel spread, spite of the president entreating her fair friends to shoot the chinning; and the meeting broke up in disorder to a chorus of mixed phrases, such as "Dry up!" "Nice blackberry you are!" "Hire a hall!" A Californian reporter relates a story of an old man who got out of a railway-car, "to spin round on his own personal curvature;" and a Californian authoress claims favourable consideration for her book on the plea that she has never dead-headed. What she means we learn from a paragraph headed, "Dead-heading in Nevada," telling how, upon the arrival of a train at Virginia-station, an Indian left it, entered a shed, stripped off his leggings, moccasins, and other aboriginal belongings, and put on the garb of civilisation. He then took a bottle of water out of his bundle, wet a handkerchief, and wiping his face with it, became a white man who had stolen a free ride from Remo; it being customary to allow Indians a free ride, providing they sat on the platform.

Reading a centennial oration, one might, indeed, suppose that Americans were a happy band of brothers, anxious to make their land the wonder and envy of the world; but, alas, their political orators and political writers have laboured in

vain, if they have not convinced us that one half their countrymen are traitors and the other half thieves; and that, whatever may be the upshot of the fierce contest of 1876, the presidential chair will be occupied by a thorough-paced scoundrel. Abuse is the one weapon of political warfare. One of the best written of New York journals complained that there was a great deal too little honest discussion of principle, and a great deal too much disgusting personal abuse, and declared it was foolish to deny it, and unpatriotic not to try and better it; and then immediately proceeded to accuse one of the presidential candidates of taking a false oath for the purpose of defrauding the Treasury, and call him the political agent of public robbers, "neither a wise man, a humane man, or a honest man." Perhaps the accused consoled himself with the reflection that men of greater fame than himself had cheated Uncle Sam of his dues. Washington Irving's name figures on the official list of defaulters respecting public moneys, his account as minister to Spain showing an unpaid balance of three cents; while a general, still serving his country, is its debtor for a third of that sum. In the same record Great Britain, on account of some transactions prior to the war of 1812, remains indebted to the United States to the tune of three dollars—a debt that might be wiped off in consideration of the United States Treasury having one of the three millions of the Alabama indemnity still to the good, although it has been distributed so liberally that, in New Bedford alone, two hundred houses have been built by seamen with their share of the plunder. Forty years ago the Clockmaker vowed: "The English are the boys for tradin' with; they shell out their cash like a sheaf of wheat in frosty weather." And his countrymen have golden reasons for endorsing the sentiment with a "That's so!"

BURIED.

We stand upon the churchyard sod and gaze
 Into the grave of our beloved dead;
 We hear the solemn words of prayer and praise;
 We mark the yew-trees waving overhead;
 We see the sunshine flicker on the grass—
 The green grass of the graves—and daisies white;
 Adown the lane the village children pass,
 And shyly pause to watch the holy rite.
 Deep in the earth upon the coffin-lid,
 Lies the last gift despairing love could make,
 White, scented blossoms, that must soon be hid
 With all we loved, from eyes and hearts that ache.
 Love, strong as life, was powerless to save;
 We can but strew fresh flowers upon the grave.

Yet in this grave, tear-moistened and new-made,
 Where we must leave the happiness of years,
 May not a worthier sacrifice be laid
 Than even our fairest flowers or wildest tears?
 If we should bury with the pure white bloom,
 A cherished folly or a secret sin,
 It might make holier the silent tomb,
 Deepen the peace the dead lies folded in.
 Oh, mute, cold grave! that doth receive our lost,
 And with our lost the offerings of our love,
 Take these things also; we do count the cost,
 And God in heaven doth, looking down, approve.
 Sleep, darling, sleep; pray God that dies with thee
 Which might have parted us eternally!

WEIGHED IN THE BALANCES.

DAME BRITANNIA—under whose image on our coins the fair Stewart's portrait has been handed down to posterity—when she can spare time from ruling the waves and other congenial pursuits, gives much attention to the delicate scales found in the uppermost storey of that proverbial hive of industry, Somerset House. These favourite scales of Dame Britannia are so daintily made that they weigh not in ounces or drachms but in milligrammes; the balance rests on a razor-edge and will weigh a hair. Over them preside two gentlemen well-known in the scientific world, Mr. Bell and Mr. Richard Bannister, who with their assistant cherubs sit up aloft, and watch over the dark ways and vain tricks of those who seek to get the weather-gage of Dame Britannia, her revenue cutters, her offices of Excise and Customs. For Britannia, sometimes rash in spending money, is—perhaps on that very account—a mighty shrewd hand at collecting it. On the distiller, the rectifier, the tobacconist, she lays her hand by no means lightly. She pokes her helmeted head into huge distilleries, and those more modest establishments wherein the noble peasant produces his potheen. With equally impatient foot she kicks at great tobacco manufactories and petty long-shore shops, where lurk negrohead and cavendish innocent of the government label. She flashes her mighty shield in the eyes of great exporting brewers, and plunges her trident into the maltster's cistern. Beneath her ægis she has for some few years past nourished the skilful chemist who, when she has made her captures, cuts up and dissects them, boils them, distils them, burns them, puts them literally and metaphorically under the microscope, and weighs them in impartial and unconscious balances.

It is some five-and-thirty years since Britannia first called in the chemist to her

aid. At that period the dame was a sorely defrauded and injured individual. Her sons treated her as if she were a mother-in-law. They rode rough-shod over her Customs and made light of her Excise. They laughed at the penalty of "Exchequering," and smoked annually hundreds of tons of tobacco which had never paid duty to the goddess. The treacherous waves over which she imagined she ruled helped largely to cheat her of her dues. Between the great ships, English and foreign, which sailed into the Thames and the long, low shore, plied countless boats all engaged in the highly-amusing and remunerative sport of smuggling. Tobacco in bales and in barrels, in sacks and packages, was whisked ashore in swift wherries and innocent-looking lighters, and found a home everywhere. English manufacturers, that is to say, those who were not in league with Will Watch, rebelled against this state of things. Their patriotism was outraged, their pockets were emptied, and they rose in defence of their rights as Britons. They pointed out that they were undersold and ruined by cheap smuggled goods, and demanded that the stringent rule of the Excise should be relaxed in their favour. Their prayer was heard, and they were allowed to use materials to aid the manufacture of tobacco other than the leaves of trees and plants. Dock, burdock, lettuce, cabbage, and—the latest improvement of all—rhubarb, were still forbidden; but for a while other ancillary substances were allowed. Minds sharpened by keen commercial competition were quick to perceive that while tobacco cost as much as three shillings and fourpence or fivepence duty paid, Will Watch might be successfully competed with by increasing the weight of the legitimate articles by the addition of molasses, liquorice, and other cheap articles. It is a well-known fact that the original weight of silk can be, and is, enormously increased by the addition of black dye—that it can be made by the dyer to turn any required weight. By parity of reasoning tobacco manufacturers arrived at the conclusion that sixty per cent. of liquorice or molasses, worked up with their tobacco, would give them a chance of fighting against the smuggler and making a profit. It happened as they expected, but Britannia's watchful eye soon perceived that the loss to her revenue by smuggling—though severe enough—was a small matter compared with that caused by the loss to the Excise by ang-

mentation or adulteration—which ever the reader pleases. On looking over her accounts Britannia saw that the importation of tobacco was falling off by millions of pounds per annum; the previous Act of Parliament was repealed and a new one passed, and the use of all substances prohibited except those essential to the manufacture of tobacco—to wit, oil and water. It is quite obvious that, so long as this Act was faithfully observed, the customer could protect himself against adulteration by the evidence of his senses, but it was soon found that extreme vigilance was necessary to protect the public against liquorice and molasses, without counting the leaves of the shrubs and plants before-mentioned. Hence the chemical department of the Internal Revenue, which speedily disclosed that the list of adulterants for cut tobacco was of hideous length. Sugar and molasses were largely used, and occasionally gum, starch, liquorice, catechu, common salt, nitrate of potash, alum, Epsom salts, yellow ochre, green copperas, peat moss, oatmeal, malt commings, chicory, and the leaves of coltsfoot, endive, rhubarb, oak, elm, plane; and in some fancy tobaccos of lavender and mugwort. This ghastly list of adulterants was published in the official reports, but exercised not the slightest influence as a deterrent. The British smoker was just then developing that love for the weed which, among the classes pretending to some degree of culture, has partly taken the place of the worship of Bacchus. I cannot guess what the spirit of the author of the "Counterblast to Tobacco" would say to the astounding and continued increase of its consumption. No doubt the stupendous smuggling of thirty or forty years ago caused the "weight of tobacco cleared for consumption in the United Kingdom" to be very much less than the weight actually consumed; but admitting that smuggling has been somewhat reduced since 1841, the figures of to-day are astonishing enough. The registered consumption in 1841 was twenty-three millions, ninety-six thousand, two hundred and eighty-one pounds, or thirteen ounces and three-quarters per head of population, including every age and sex; while the last accounts made up record the amazing total of forty-nine millions, fifty-one thousand, eight hundred and thirty pounds; or one pound seven ounces and a half per head; the increase since 1869 being no less than one ounce and three-quarters per head. Women, children, and non-smokers being

deducted, these figures would swell to a very high average.

Britannia's balances then were first set to work in order to protect her pocket rather than the health of her children, for it is only of late that she has exhibited any solicitude as to the coats of their stomachs. Tobacco was, and is, a great difficulty; the high duty on an article of small intrinsic value offering an invincible temptation to Will Watch the land lubber, as well as to the seagoing representative of the Watch family. It would be difficult to pay a visit to the laboratory at Somerset House without finding there various samples of tobacco more or less—generally more—saturated with sugar, molasses, or liquorice. English makers grumbled so persistently about the competition of foreign-made and smuggled cavendish and negrohead, that Britannia again took pity upon them, and now allows them to manufacture these confessedly sweetened tobaccos "in bond," that is to say, in a workshop under her own shield; that the increase of weight from the added sweetness may be well and duly calculated, and the clever housewife paid her proper percentage thereon; but awkward cases are perpetually turning up of tobacco, not labelled as it should be with her image and superscription, but quite in the rough, and saturated with liquorice—and—other things. Britannia has little mercy on delinquents, and fines them severely, but not more than they can afford to pay, if they have carried on the trade undiscovered for a little while.

Beer, according to the Italian librettist, the source of the Englishman's haughtiness, gives much employment to Britannia's chemists. The malt-tax requires for its collection an army of supervisors and assistants, who lead the by no means free and independent maltster a terrible life. When barley is "malted" it increases in bulk, and almost endless measurements must be gone through before the duty, which amounts altogether to about two shillings and eightpence halfpenny per bushel, can be properly levied. This is rather a matter for the exciseman than the chemist and botanist, but there are complications which demand the assistance of the expert. A maltster occasionally malts a batch of bad barley—unsaleable in its finished condition—and then asks Britannia for a "drawback;" that is to say, he wants to be recouped in the amount of his duty. Now, as two shillings

and eightpence halfpenny per bushel represent a considerable profit on barley, it is, of course, worth while for a fraudulent maltster to "ring in" a quantity of unmalted grain, and claim his drawback thereon. Wherefore, his so-called malt is cautiously sampled and investigated before he is allowed his deduction, and the condemned malt must be mixed and ground up with linseed, to make sure that it cannot be used in any way for the manufacture of beer, but can serve only as food for cattle. A similar rule prevails as regards tobacco in the Customs Department. Leaf tobacco includes in its weight a considerable proportion of the "mid-rib" or backbone of the leaf; the removal of which leaves it in the condition of "strip." Now, except in the case of "bird's-eye," the eyes in which are composed of transverse sections of midrib, this rib is entirely useless. Tobacco manufacturers demand a drawback on the useless midrib, and their claim is allowed, but the said ribs must be ground to powder and sent out of the country before the drawback is allowed. Britannia will not permit midribs, like damaged tobacco, to be burnt in the Queen's Tobacco-pipe, but insists on their export—hence the enormous amount of "other snuffs" in distinction to the fancy sorts exported annually. I don't know what is done with this "other snuff," at which the poorest civilised snuff-taker would turn up his nose. Hundreds of thousands of pounds of it are exported annually, but whither does it go? To Africa, to the Islands of the Southern Sea, or to the bottom of the British Channel? Or is it, mayhap, "run in" again by W. W. or some of his friends, to the end that another drawback may be got out of it? Verily I know not; but this much is certain, that Britannia's chemists look very sharply indeed at the samples of drawback snuff submitted to them, lest it should have been augmented by foreign substances which would be cheap at three shillings and twopence per pound—the duty on unmanufactured tobacco.

Beer for export—or rather the drawback claimed on the malt employed in its manufacture—requires much nicety in its adjustment, and gave the late Mr. George Phillips and his successors no little trouble before they arrived at their present method. Under the ancient plan, beers for export were divided into two-classes—strong and

mild; the higher drawback being, of course, allowed on the former. The sole test was the palate of the examining officer, who, after tasting the beer, decided whether it was strong or mild, and in accordance with the declaration. An idea may be formed of the value of this test from the melancholy fact that, whereas the active, intelligent, and expert officers employed in testing beers for export only detected, in the last year of the old system, one per cent. of incorrect declarations, the analyst discovered seventy per cent. in the following year. Under the new plan, the brewer declares the specific gravity and other particulars concerning his batch of beer for export, and all these points are carefully checked by an ingenious process of analysis, by which the quantity of malt extract remaining in the beer, and the amount which has been converted into alcohol and acetic acid, are ascertained, and the bulk of malt originally employed is accurately arrived at.

There are no difficulties with the export brewers now. Such discrepancies as occur between the government chemists and those employed by the brewers are very trifling, and point the moral, that human nature is very honest when kept so. The last remark may appear cynical, but a visit to the laboratory of the Inland Revenue Department is not calculated to inspire faith in the honour and disinterestedness of mankind. One thing appears certain, that indirect taxation by means of Customs or Excise is productive of an enormous amount of rascality. While pepper was subject to a heavy duty, adulteration was practised on a gigantic scale. Out of one hundred and forty-six samples examined in 1844, no fewer than one hundred and twenty-two were adulterated with rice, linseed-meal, chillies, the husks of red and white mustard, and a mixture "known in the trade" as P.D., and containing most of the articles mentioned. It will be understood at once that powdered rice and linseed-meal would lower the pungency of the pepper, which was restored by the addition of powdered chillies.

The almost complete suppression of illicit distillation has turned ingenious minds towards other methods of getting the better of Britannia's lawful dues. The article known familiarly as spirits of wine is largely used in various arts and manufactures, and was formerly manufactured mainly in private stills. When it was employed as a solvent for certain gums in the

manufacture of varnish and other materials, the duty represented an immense proportion of the entire cost. Ten shillings duty on an article which costs about one shilling and ninepence to produce is a tempting bait, and it was hardly denied that very little of the spirits of wine used in commerce paid excise. To get rid of this scandal and loss to the revenue, distillers were allowed drawback on spirits vitiated in bond to such extent that they became impossible for drinking purposes. After some experiments, it was decided that the debasement should be accomplished by means of wood naphtha—that the spirit should be "methylated." In the language of chemists, spirits of wine is "ethylic" alcohol, depending for its character on the presence of "ethyl"; while wood naphtha—the spirit produced by the perfect combustion of wood—is called "methylic" alcohol, from the presence of "methyl." The peculiar nauseousness of this form of alcohol suggested its employment for debasing spirits of wine, and it was agreed that the addition of one part of it to nine of the latter would be sufficient for the protection of the revenue. This operation has ever since been performed in bond, and the cheapness of methylated spirit has proved a sore blow to the illicit distiller. Finding his own trade knocked on the head, this ingenious individual has since tried his hand on methylated spirit, and has been within an ace of getting rid of the methyl, and producing a drinkable fluid. One thing is certain, that among a certain community in the East-end of London, large quantities of methylated spirit—more or less successfully cleansed—have been and are, drunk daily. It is also well-known that sweet spirit of nitre, and other pharmacopœial preparations, can be made from the debased alcohol now so largely sold.

The protection of Britannia's pocket, as practised by Messrs. Bell and Bannister, is not entirely confined to excisable articles. Samples of medical and other stores supplied to various departments, such as the Admiralty, the Board of Trade and the India Office, are duly tested and weighed in the balances at Somerset House. One of the most important of these articles is the lime and lemon-juice which, according to the Merchant Shipping Act, all vessels voyaging in certain latitudes are obliged to carry with them for the use of poor Jack. It was at first sorely against the grain that Jack took his rations

of lime-juice on board Britannia's war-ships, but the success of the "physic" was so complete that its use has been made compulsory in the Mercantile Marine. Not only must lime or lemon juice be carried aboard ship, but juice up to a certain standard of strength—i.e., containing the proper percentage of citric acid—and free from adulterants of all kinds. In some years there is great scarcity of lemon-juice sufficiently good for ships' stores. In 1874, for instance, large quantities of foreign-squeezed lemon-juice were presented for examination, but a considerable proportion had to be rejected, on account of its having been below the standard. English lemon-squeezers—the persons, not the wooden instruments known by that name—are now so well aware that only good juice will be accepted, that they seldom present inferior or diluted juice for examination, but the foreign "squeezer" has not yet seen the error of his ways. Foreign-squeezed juice is prepared with too much or too little care, as it frequently contains common salt, and is sometimes diluted with water. In the year just cited, foreign juices as compared with home-squeezed were rejected in the proportion of nearly two to one; yet, although more than twenty-three thousand gallons were rejected, no member of the trade questioned the accuracy of Britannia's balances—a feat that members of other trades are by no means unapt to perform. When the juice has passed through its trial successfully, it is, in the bonded warehouses, fortified with fifteen per cent. of proof spirit in order that it may "keep," and is then bottled, sealed, labelled, and sent on board to insure poor Jack against scurvy. To the end that he may have his lime-juice fresh and fresh, it is enacted that in no case shall it be in bottles containing more than two gallons, and in ships carrying twenty persons or fewer, quart bottles only are permitted. The Merchant Shipping Act of 1867 expressly commands that the master of the ship "shall serve it out himself, or cause it to be served out, at the rate of an ounce per day for each member of the crew so soon as they have been at sea for ten days"; and the medical officers "recommend" that, when the juice is served out, it should be "mixed in the proportion of one fluid ounce of lime-juice and one ounce of sugar to not less than half-a-pint, and not more than a pint, of water, and that the mixture should be served out in sufficient quantity

to each mess or watch at the dinner-hour, so that it may be obtained by the crew in time to drink during their meal." To these properly stringent commands and recommendations is added a humorous aspiration of the medical officers that "Lime and lemon juice should be regarded, not as a medicine, but as a necessary article of ordinary diet." Perhaps, if the "fortification" were applied with a more liberal hand, Jack might in time be brought to consider the dose "ordinary diet," but fifteen per cent. of rum to an ounce of lemon-juice and half-a-pint of water makes a mixture, wholesome, no doubt, but "nothing like grog."

About four years ago a permanent arrangement was made with the India Office respecting the examination, at the Inland Revenue Laboratory, of samples for that department. This additional work has enormously increased the variety of the substances examined. Many hundreds of samples are sent yearly from the India Office, consisting of food—canned meats and soups, pickles, and preserves; disinfectants, clothing, numerous oils, lubricants, soaps, wax, varnishes, pigments, salts; metals, such as copper, and other articles, among which medicines occupy a prominent place. Since the practice of analysing these articles has been adopted there has been a marked improvement in their quality—a matter, in some cases, of literally vital importance. The medicines largely used in tropical climates should, on account of the difficulty of procuring them abroad, be of the best possible description and highest degree of purity. It was, however, soon discovered that cinchona bark was supplied of very inferior quality, being almost useless as a medicine; and, in one or two instances, the bark examined was not cinchona bark at all. Of the cinchona alkaloids—quinine and its congeners—some of the most expensive were adulterated with those of little commercial or medicinal value; and, in several cases, one kind was substituted for another, the "substituted article being invariably of less value than the one it was made to represent." Paint, too, is very liable to sophistication, the favourite adulterants being chalk and sulphate of baryta—substances which seriously affect the durability and the value of the paints. Beeswax, again, was found to be adulterated with tallow. A large quantity of wine was far below the quality of the sample submitted for tender, and one

sample of beer examined for the Admiralty was thirty per cent. lower in commercial value than it purported to be. These experiences naturally induced Britannia to inquire into the quality of other articles supplied for the use of her soldiers, sailors, and scribes. Ink and sealing-wax were examined; and in one parcel of the latter was discovered forty-one per cent. of earthy matter over the contract sample. Even paper has been analysed at the Government laboratory; and in one case supplied a vivid illustration of the great advantage of chemical analysis, in determining the commercial value of different commodities, as compared with the opinion of ordinary experts. The Post Office authorities having called attention to the insufficient strength of the stamped newspaper wrappers supplied by the Board of Inland Revenue, the contractor was requested to submit a sample of paper of equal weight, but of greater strength than the old. The extra price of the new paper, when calculated on the year's supply, amounted to a considerable sum, and, as it appeared excessive, the paper was submitted to practised paper examiners, who pronounced it not worth the additional cost. At the suggestion of the Secretary the papers were weighed in Britannia's balances. The result showed that the paper in use contained fifteen per cent. of earthy matter, which added to its weight but not to its strength. In the new paper this was replaced by fifteen per cent. of fibre. A microscopical examination of the two papers further showed, that the fibrous material of the new was longer and stronger than that of the old paper. This chemical and microscopical examination of the paper thus brought the practical expert to naught, and proved that the demand for extra price was amply justified by improved quality.

Britannia's own scales are not infrequently employed in deciding—according to the Sale of Food and Drugs Act, 1875—when learned doctors disagree. It must not by this be imagined that the Government Laboratory is exactly a chemical Court of Appeal or Analytical House of Lords. Its opinions will not override those of other analysts, except in some cases of conflicting evidence. For instance, the analyst employed by the prosecution against a baker who has, or has not, put alum in his bread—a very delicate point to settle—against the milkman whose sky-blue is alleged to be watered, and the cheesemonger whose butter is of suspicious origin, may hold that the baker has un-

doubtedly employed alum, that the milkman has sold stuff containing not nearly the invariable proportion of solid matter; that the cheesemonger has largely intermingled not only water, but cart-grease and other horrors, with his best Dorset; while the rival analyst employed for the defence may hold that the bread contains no more than the proportion of phosphate of alumina natural to wheaten flour; that there is not much really known about milk and its solids; that the presence of foreign fats in butter cannot be detected by any analytical process known. Under these circumstances it is competent to either plaintiff or defendant to demand that samples shall be sent to Somerset House and analysed there, in order to assist the magistrate in arriving at a conclusion. It is not to be wondered at that difficult problems should now and then crop up under the Act just referred to. The possible quantity of alum existing in bread must be proved from the residue of alumina after the bread is burnt, and the slightest error in estimating this substance will cause a stupendous blunder in calculating the alum. Just now, opinions are divided as to the effect on the human frame of the exceedingly minute quantity of copper found in certain kinds of pickles, as well as on the butter and milk questions; on both of which the opinion of Britannia's own analysts is confronted by the great authority of Professor Wanklyn.

Leaving these scientific luminaries to settle disputed points among themselves, I depart from the Strand Laboratory not a little impressed by the nature of the work done there, and the practical teaching afforded to the students from the Surveying Department. During the last year more than fourteen thousand samples were examined by the skilful and industrious gentlemen whose mission it is to see that Britannia's grog is not watered, her pickles not poisoned, and her pocket not picked; in very plain English, to keep her children, at least in their dealings with her, up to a certain standard of honesty.

STANDING ARMIES.

THE enormous armaments under which every considerable state in continental Europe groans, and which press, like a nightmare, on the labouring breast of commerce, are quite of modern growth. It is quite true that the kings of an earlier day

hankered after standing armies; but it is equally true that those costly luxuries were beyond their reach. The great Asiatic monarchies—Assyria, Babylon, Persia—had not a single professional soldier on the muster-roll. Nor had highly-organised Egypt so much as a brigade or a battalion of men whose trade was war. The strength of these oriental empires lay in a martial nobility, ever ready to fight on horseback or in chariots, after the fashion of Homeric heroes, and in a submissive population, prompt to exchange hoe and sickle for spear and sling.

The gigantic force which Xerxes led forth from Asia for the conquest of Greece, and of that Europe, of which Greece was then the unconscious bulwark, might have been fitly described in the words of Prince Bismarck's caustic retort. It was no army, but a multitude of armed persons, alien to one another in speech, and garb, and colour, undrilled and undisciplined, and driven, like a mob of oxen, under the advancing standards of the Great King. Nor were their Grecian foes, then or long after, anything higher than a militia, in which archer, and slinger, and horseman, and heavy-armed hoplite, did temporary duty at the call, less of national, than of municipal danger.

Philip and his mighty son brought together the first real army that the world had ever seen. The Macedonian conquerors were the first to evoke the soldier-spirit, which has never since quite died out, and to teach the lesson by which Napoleon largely profited, that the recruits of vanquished or tributary countries, well officered and welded into a mass, will fight the battles of the victor. The Silver Spears of Alexander appear as the legitimate prototypes of the Old Guard, and the motley host which sacked Persepolis of that which forced its road to Moscow. Professional soldiery did not, however, always assert its superiority. It was a civilian army of Romans, fresh from the plough and from the workshop, which overthrew the Epirotes and chased Pyrrhus to his ships.

The wonderful campaigns of Hannibal, his rapid marches, the quick blows which he struck, and the peril of Rome, first suggested to the countrymen of Fabius and Scipio that the soldier, paid and trained to fight, was after all a defter instrument of strife than the wild warrior or even the armed citizen. The Carthaginian invader had won his triumphs at the head of foreign hirelings. Rome could

raise, for long terms of service, cohorts more manageable than those of which the ranks were filled by recruits of Roman blood. What was true of the Western, was still more true of the Eastern empire. Strange, in an ethnological point of view, was the medley of races drawn together under the Labarum of the rich emperor of Constantinople; Turk, and Hun, and Avar, German and Dacian, fighting side by side for a day's pay.

The great difficulty of the mediæval kings of Europe was to be kings in deed as well as in name. The feudal system, with all its bad points, had its good ones. The spears that a monarch summoned to war could be pointed against him in peace, when the flatterers that ever beset a royal ear suggested some illegal subsidy or benevolence. Had the Parliament of England relaxed its hold upon the national purse-strings—had the States General of France, or the Cortes of Spain, been earlier coaxed or cudgelled into compliance with the costly whims of a greedy and luxurious court—the fairest and most enlightened lands of Europe might have become what Persia is now, mere milch kine to a hard master.

Our own Richard of the Lion Heart, the French-speaking, crusading, poet-king—who never came to England but to get money by the sale of a score of charters, by ransom, capitulation, anything—valued his hired soldiers, Brabanters for the most part, far above his English six-weeks' army, good for a march and a battle, but hard to keep together at the end of its forty days. Magnificent Edward the Third ruined himself—and drained every friendly purse from Chester and London to Bruges and Florence—for the sake of the Dugald Dalgetties of every nationality, drawn together beneath the pennon of St. George, to reap the golden grain of the harvest that the island bowmen had sown at Poitiers and Cressy.

During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, soldiery was decidedly a very comfortable and lucrative trade, a business that brought in large profits and quick returns, which procured personal consideration for those engaged in it, and which, strangest of all, was attended with little risk. Any "tall fellow" of strong limbs, shapely presence, and bold brow, might, if he were but "a proper man of his hands," and adroit in military exercise, earn eight times the wages of a skilled mechanic. If he could buy, beg, or steal a horse, and

ride it when he had got it, his fortune was, indeed, made. At one time the hire of a cavalry soldier, armed and mounted at his own cost, ranged, in France at least, so extravagantly high, that, with regard to the actual value of money, it may be roughly calculated as within a few francs of what a commandant or major, with a battalion under his orders, now receives.

There was not much danger in the warfare of that period, to which belongs that wonderful Lombard battle, in which but two lives were lost, and those by the suffocation of unhorsed champions, smothered by the weight of their armour before the victors had time to unlace and unbrace them, and restore them to fresh air and daylight. The aim of the mercenaries was to capture, not to kill. They fought to screw the ransom out of beaten opponents, and had a fellow-feeling for one another, just as professional cricketers have now. They might, as a matter of business, cut a throat now and then, when wrong-headed prisoners proved too obstinate; and of course the wretched peasantry, among whom they lived at free quarters, met with scanty consideration from these well-salaried warriors.

The great source of profit to the soldier of the later middle ages was that he had a monopoly of his craft. Noble, gentle, or ungente, he was at least a freeman, at a time when five-sixths of the population of Europe were slaves chained to the soil. He could hold up his head, speak his mind, and handle his weapon, when the half-starved tiller of the soil was afraid to call his crops or his cottage, his wife and his children, his own. And as, very gradually, the old feudal tyranny grew stiff and palsied, and lost its vigorous aggressiveness, the army of a nation became more and more national. The Thirty Years' War was indeed waged almost altogether by mercenary troops, beneath the Imperial or the Swedish standard; but Cromwell's unequalled army, highly paid, strictly disciplined, and regarded with envious admiration by every court and prince on both sides of the Alps, was thoroughly English.

In the Merry Monarch's days, English discipline, English efficiency, had ceased to be a proverb on the Continent. Incomparably the best-drilled army in Europe was that of the Grand Turk. No infantry were such practised children of the camp as were the sultan's famous Janissaries; no artillery was so formidable as his. The hugest army was that of the Most Catholic

sovereign of Spain and of the Indies, but it was already in a sorry condition, ill fed and ill led. The finest was that which Richelieu and Mazarin had begun to raise, and to which Louvois put the finishing touches, for the absolute king of France—an army that caused many an uneasy moment to the great grandfathers of our own great grandsires here in England.

The principle on which Louvois went to work was a straightforward and a simple one. He proposed to himself to keep on foot a great army that should be cheap, manageable, and yet capable of bearing down by weight of numbers any ordinary foe. The common soldier, the mere pawn on the chessboard, was to be nourished, clad, and lodged at as low a rate as might be. Let him eat his fill, and replenish his mug with wine, when he got into an enemy's country, and could live at the cost of the king's enemies—in the Palatinate, say, or in Holland or Spain—but in France itself the lean grenadier was tightly held in hand, whatever indulgence might be shown to officers of noble birth. A few privileged corps—the Guards, the Musketeers Black and Gray, the hired Swiss, were ready to do the cream of the fighting. And, as for the mere commonalty, their feudal seigneurs might be trusted to force or cajole a sufficiency of recruits to join the ranks.

Frederick the Great, if he followed in the footsteps of Louvois as a military organiser, far surpassed his master in the art of extracting from a reluctant soldiery the maximum of obedience at the minimum of cost. With cane and scourge, with blackball and pipeclay, with bullet and black-hole for the more refractory, he succeeded in making regiments and brigades that hated him, and that were largely composed of bought or kidnapped men, as steady as so many automatons under fire. It was better, the poor wretches felt, to front the shot, than to wince beneath the rattan of the adjutant and the sergeant's strap; and so they fought, and bled, and were driven off like hounds, after the quarry was dead, to kennel again.

Our own military system, as was natural under a German dynasty, and under such captains-general as H.R.H. Calloden Cumberland, and the martial bishop of Osnaburg, was laid down on German lines. The soldier's gleaming little tin of soup, the soldier's lump of boiled beef, are legacies of the two earliest Georges. Because the Hanoverian private dined

thus, the British private, albeit not of a soup-eating nation, and growing ever at the outlandish fashion of his food, conformed to the Hanoverian pattern. Wolfe's recently published letters have told us, that his opinion of the stocked and powdered soldiers of his own time was very much that enounced by Dr. Johnson in *The Rambler*. Sergeant Kite and Ensign Plume had purveyed the men from the dregs of the population. They had been lashed and hustled into a creditable appearance on parade. Some of them, like the Foot Guards at Lincelles, could fight like heroes, and good-humoured, merciful heroes withal. But of the rest competent judges wrote down that their valour was "precarious," their honesty hazy, and their morality imperfect.

In one respect the British army beat all others, and that was the important question of its daily meals. It was very much more regularly paid, and much more sedulously fed—thanks to the liberal votes of a lavish Parliament!—than were the white-coats of France, or the yellow-coats of Spain. Army contractors at Blenheim or Fontenoy were not impeccable men, nor were Paymasters to the Forces quite clean-handed; but, compared with foreign intendants and commissaries, they were as mirrors of integrity. There was much desertion, much drunkenness, and, in spite of the cruel floggings then in vogue, an extraordinary amount of petty theft among the men. At the sight of a red-coat, prudent cottagers snatched away the linen from the garden hedge, and gathered in the scared poultry, as though grenadiers had been gipsies. The soldier, off duty, was reckoned as a scamp, light-fingered and light-heeled.

A good deal of undeserved, or, at least, exaggerated praise, has been heaped upon the ragged levies of the French Revolutionary Government, the men of *Jemappes*. The Austrians in Flanders, led by crabbed formalists, whose one tactical idea was to turn an enemy's flank, certainly were worsted by the shoeless, active boys who paid no regard to tradition. But when English and Russian brigades came crowding into Flanders, the contest was one between striplings and grown men. The real Grand Army—the victors of Lodi, of the Pyramids, of Austerlitz—was so largely leavened by the tough old soldiers of the ancient régime, that even the untiring brain and iron will of Napoleon could never bring together its equal. The

conquerors of Wagram and Jena did not trample down resistance as the builders of the Boulogne imperial column had done. The mixed host that left its bones in Russian snow was far inferior to that which had menaced England, and those which bore the brunt from Leipsic to Montmartre were mainly made up of boys.

The "tax of blood," so called—the grinding conscription which weighs upon all continental Europe, and which only the friendly seven-league sea enables us to avoid—produces, everywhere, imposing numerical results, and, in Germany, Russia, Spain, and Turkey, an abundance of broad-chested and hardy young men. In France and Belgium the age of twenty is maintained by the recruiting department at the sacrifice of a heavy percentage of those nominally liable to serve; while the sons of well-to-do families slip or wriggle, eel-like, through the complaisant meshes of the net, and leave behind a residuum over which experienced officers shake their heads.

Nothing, on paper, or in a country where, as in Prussia, rule and fact go hand-in-hand, can work more smoothly than a conscription. Nothing, in practice, and where interest and wealth throw their weight into the scales, is more easy to evade. The strapping younger son of *M. le Marquis* is exempted, on the plea of weak eyes or diseased lungs, of which nobody ever heard before, from the actual handling of a coarse musket, and goes into the reserved list of infirmary attendants. The young viscount is made honorary clerk to the Hay and Straw Office. *M. Chose*, the manufacturer of Lyons, has influence enough to pitchfork his son and heir into the staff of a territorial general yet to be appointed. Scores of rich young fellows make believe to do duty as cavalry volunteers, and clink and swagger along the asphalté of the boulevards, while some plebeian comrade, stimulated by five-franc pieces and eleemosynary sips of brandy, grooms their horses and burnishes their accoutrements. So little have eighty years of experience reconciled the South of France peasantry to the conscription, that to lurk for months in hiding-holes among the rocks, or to lodge for half a year in a Spanish farm, is the alternative of thousands of "refractories."

A standing army is, in truth, a monster hard to construct, difficult to keep in working order, and all but impossible to

renew, when war has drained it of its strength, and taken the bloom from its brave appearance. A generation has elapsed since 1854, and yet our own Foot Guards do not loom as large as the scarlet-coated giants who went out to the Crimea; Austrian colonels of crack regiments mourn the stately front-rank men laid low at Sadowa; and the wide-chested "substitutes" no longer lend an imposing aspect to the head of a French column. Such as they are, however, the vast aggregate of European armies represents a colossal pecuniary sacrifice, and a waste of time and a tax upon the bone and sinew of a nation, not over pleasant to contemplate.

Very large armies gravitate towards war, as if to justify the fact of their existence. It is felt sometimes, even by peaceable persons, as if it were better to employ the great destroying engine, once for all, than continually to oil, and polish, and regild the costly piece of murderous mechanism. To despotic monarchs a fine army is only too apt to appear in the light of a toy, or rather, perhaps, of a keen-edged tool, wherewith to cut and carve the dominions of a feeblar neighbour. And there have been occasions when the dangerous machine, like a sorcerer's fiend, clamouring to be employed, has become self-acting, as did the Sikh Khalsa and the plundering army of the Constable de Bourbon, and has forced its unwilling rulers into war.

WHAT HE COST HER.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MASHINGBERD," "AT HER MERCY,"
"HALVES," &c.

CHAPTER XXXIV. THE COMMISSARY GROWS CONFIDENTIAL.

THE colonel's remark had a certain "lilt" with it, and as Ella looked through the window and saw "the gallant commissary coming through the square," she could not but acknowledge there was a romantic air about him, that suggested melody; it was not the poetry of motion, for his walk was strictly, not to say stiffly, military; but his bearing was triumphant, his colour high—even to his cheek-bones—and he swung his cane in quite a light and airy manner. In his button-hole was a bouquet; as large as ladies are wont to carry, and on his enormous hands were stretched a pair of lavender gloves. It was unusual to see the commissary out of uniform, he avoided mufti "upon principle," he said, and be-

cause "in his time officers were not ashamed of their profession," though his enemies affirmed that motives of economy, and a well-grounded apprehension of being taken for a colour-sergeant out on a holiday had something to do with it; but to behold him thus attired was a portent.

"Does he not look every inch like an expectant bridegroom?" observed the colonel grinning.

"He looks more dreadful than ever, I think," said Ella with a little shiver.

Then her host came in, and welcomed her to his "humble roof" with what was for him "effusion;" and Gracie came down, and was embraced with every demonstration of paternal affection. The colonel, from motives of delicacy, and also because he was upon the brink of a burst of laughter, stood apart at the window whistling softly to himself, "Froggy would a-wooing go."

"I hope you found what has been done in your old home a pleasant surprise, Gracie?" said her father.

"Everything looks very nice and pretty, papa; and it was very thoughtful and kind of you to put those charming flowers in our rooms."

"Eh, flowers, what flowers? Oh, I daresay that was Gertrude's doings—I mean Miss de Horsingham's. That lady has been most kind, my dear. I consulted her in your absence about the little arrangements in preparation for your return, and for the reception of our honoured guest here, Mrs. Landon; and I think she has acquitted herself to admiration."

"Everything is very nice, I am sure," said Ella, seeing that her friend was at a loss for words. "I am very sorry, however, to have been the cause of having kept Gracie from home so long, and from executing her own proper functions as the mistress of your house."

"Oh, don't mention it," returned the commissary coolly; "Miss de Horsingham has a great taste for embellishment."

"I hope that does not extend to her conversation," said Ella quietly.

The colonel, at the window, exploded into a roar.

"There's a boy's hat just fallen in the mud," he said in explanation, as the commissary drew himself up with an offended air.

"Miss de Horsingham is the soul of truth, Mrs. Landon," observed her host.

"Then I should very much like to see her," returned Ella blandly.

"Your wish shall be gratified to-morrow. Gracie shall ask her to dinner."

"But, papa, it is so soon," faltered Gracie. She knew Miss de Horsingham, and rather liked her; but she had been by no means an intimate friend of the family; indeed they had had none such but Ella. At the same time, if this lady had been kind to her father, she felt it was her duty to acknowledge it; and as to his having any matrimonial views, they never entered into her head; mainly, perhaps, because she concluded that Miss de Horsingham must needs be without dowry.

"Your objection would hold good, with respect to any stranger," said the commissary loftily. "Indeed, Gracie, I think you might give me credit for understanding that much. But Miss de Horsingham has shown an interest in me and mine which merits a peculiar acknowledgment. The colonel here is, of course, in an exceptional position. He will make one, I hope, of our little party."

"I'll come like a shot," said the colonel cheerily.

"But that does not prevent Ella's uncle from dining here to-day also, papa," said Gracie. The commissary was not generally lavish of his hospitality, and it was a stroke of policy for straightforward Gracie quite Machiavellian, which thus reminded her father of the relationship between the colonel and their guest.

"Of course not; of course he'll dine to-day—if he'll take us in the rough, and trust to pot-luck."

This observation must have been dictated by something of the pride that apes humility; for in fact, very extraordinary preparations had been made on Ella's behalf; and the avant-courier of them had already stolen into the room from the kitchen.

"I have an old campaigner's nose, commissary," said the colonel, alluding to this grateful odour, "and I will risk the pot-luck."

The dinner, in fact, was as great a success as circumstances permitted it to be; the two gentlemen were in high good-humour; and Ella, as usual, endeavoured to forget her own sad thoughts in lively conversation with her uncle. Gracie could not banish from her mind that memory which seemed to have died out so soon from her father's, and his mirth jarred upon her ears. She knew that her mother had expected to be forgotten by him; that she had felt her own death not only as the

laying down of a heavy burthen, but as releasing others from their share of it; yet the thought: "Does she see, does she hear, is she sensible of this too swift erasure of the past?" would intrude on her. Nevertheless, she did her best to play the hostess.

"Now, I call this very nice and comfortable," said the commissary, when the ladies had withdrawn, and the whisky and hot water made their appearance. "Here's to your niece's health, colonel!"

"You are very good," said the colonel, a little stiffly. He did not dislike the other's companionship for himself, but he resented the idea of any familiarity upon his part with Ella. He had said no more than the truth, when he had expressed his wish that she had come to his own roof, rather than to that of the commissary; and he thought it rather a liberty in him to have invited her.

"We will have a good bout of it this evening," observed his host, "since to-morrow we shall be rather on our p's and q's I suppose."

"Why?" inquired the colonel.

"Well, Miss de Horsingham will be here, you know."

"I don't see why we should be more on our p's and q's, as you call it, because of the commandant's governess, than now, with my niece and your daughter in the house."

"I only meant that she would be more of a stranger," said the commissary hastily.

"Well, I suppose that won't be the case very long, will it?" observed the other.

He spoke indifferently, almost contemptuously, and looked up so impudently at his companion, that some men, having a glass of steaming grog in their hand, might have been induced to throw the contents in his face. But the commissary, who was drinking, merely winked significantly over the top of his tumbler, and when he had set it down replied:

"You have hit it, colonel."

"It was impossible to miss it," returned the other. "One can't miss a barn-door flying. I am not speaking of the lady of course"—for the commissary's face had suddenly turned to that yellow-red which, in his signal-book, betokened fury—"but of your intentions regarding her. They are honourable, I have no doubt, but they are deuced open."

"I mean them to be so."

"Wanted to compromise the lady, eh?"

Quite right," said the colonel, stirring his glass, and looking at his boots.

The glance that his companion bestowed on him, was a concentration of malignity and passion; but it was unseen, or, at all events, unheeded. He went on in a philosophic tone:

"All is fair in love and war, they say, and to secure a woman there is nothing like the plan you have adopted; but it has this disadvantage, that it cuts both ways. You are as much bound to her, as she is to you, and though there is no brother in the case, the commandant himself would think it his duty, remember, to see the lady righted."

"Of course he would, should there be occasion; but I have quite made up my mind upon the matter."

"You really mean to marry this woman, then?"

"I really mean to marry this lady," said the commissary with a significant stress.

"Well, you know your own business best, no doubt; but I should have thought that a man like you—a warm man, a man with a good bit of savings, I suppose—"

The commissary shook his head; but smiled, nevertheless. It was a very gentle denial of the impeachment.

"I say, I should have thought, Ray, that you would have chosen a younger woman—'a companion for your dear girl,' as widowers with a grown-up daughter always say, to justify their choice of a chicken."

"I should not have thought myself justified, as regards Gracie, in making choice of any young woman," said the commissary loftily, "unless she had an independence of her own."

"Which Miss de Horsingham has not, I conclude?"

"I never asked her any such question."

"Nor ever made any inquiries, I suppose?"

The commissary smiled, not so much, it seemed, in answer to the colonel's roguish look, as at something that was passing in his own mind.

"Come, tell me the truth, general."

The "general," coming as it did unexpectedly, and at the end of so many observations by no means of the conciliatory sort, was too much for even the commissary's reticence. His smile expanded to a grin, and his large face glowed with conscious pride.

"Well, I know I can trust you, colonel."

"I will be close as wax."

"And you won't—you won't take advantage of what I am about to confide in you by endeavouring to cut me out?"

"To cut you out? Gracious heavens! with the De Horsingham? Certainly not."

"Very good, that lady has ten thousand pounds, sir, in her own right."

"I don't believe it," said the colonel bluntly. "It's no good you're being put out; this is really one of those statements which a man ought to preface with: 'I would not have believed it if I had not seen it myself'—and so give his friend a loophole."

"Well, I have seen it myself," said the commissary.

"What, the money? The ten thousand pounds? Does she carry it about with her in notes? And if she does, are you sure they are not flash notes? Have you looked at the water-mark?"

The commissary held up his finger for silence, looked cautiously at the door, and then whispered in his companion's ear:

"I have been to Doctors' Commons and read her father's will: 'I give and bequeath to my only daughter Rosanna, the sum of ten thousand pounds.'"

"Perhaps she has spent it since," suggested the colonel.

It was a random shot, fired after the engagement was well-nigh over, for the speaker felt that he was beaten; but it went home.

The commissary turned a dreadful colour—his own particular, with something added—as though he were crossing the Channel on a rough day.

"How on earth should she spend it?" faltered he with sickening apprehension.

"I don't know, because I don't know her tastes," said the colonel. "But some women's are devilish expensive."

"She is economy itself," said the commissary.

"Ah, that's a bad sign; one never knows the value of money till one has lost it."

"I don't think she'd dare," muttered the commissary through his shut teeth, and looking very unlike a bridegroom. "She has never boasted of her money, it is true; but she has led me to conclude—I mean before I found it out for myself—that she has got something."

"Like somebody else," said the colonel, "eh? You will be a pair of cunning ones, you two."

To this disparaging observation, the commissary answered nothing. His com-

panion's chance suggestion had fallen on very fruitful soil, prepared for its reception by base suspicions of all human kind. He wiped his damp forehead with a huge red bandanna, and laid his bony hand upon his companion's arm.

"Look here, Juxon, we have been old friends for many a year, and know all about one another—or nearly so. You must give me a helping hand—I am not the rich man you suppose me to be. I don't want your money," he added hastily—for the colonel had drawn himself up a little, and was mechanically buttoning up his pockets—"but only your advice. You have a deuced long head of your own, and you understand womankind. It is necessary for me—absolutely necessary—that I should marry money. Now, if Miss de Horsingham hasn't got it"—the commissary looked so miserably embarrassed, and at a loss for words, that his friend took pity on him, and finished the sentence: "You would let her remain Miss de Horsingham, in short, to the end of the chapter."

"I would see her—at York," said the commissary, mentioning, however, a much more southerly spot. "It is necessary to be quite sure, my good friend, and I want your advice, as to how to make sure."

"Ask her," said the colonel bluntly. "You need not say anything about the money that has been left her, since you have made certain of that; but let the conversation turn upon extravagance, and then put the question point blank. 'Dearest Rosanna, I am afraid with your generous instincts, and your scorn of petty details, that you are one neither to look after the pence, nor take care of the pounds.' Then she will say, 'Yes, she is, because she has had a lesson;' or she will say, 'No, she isn't;' and then you will know that the money—or some of it—is gone. I don't think a woman would evade a home-thrust like that. It would afford her such a capital opportunity of confessing to a little extravagance, if she has really committed a great one, and of course you must not let her suspect that, if she has, you are off your bargain."

"I'll just write that down," said the commissary, producing his note-book; "I mean the question I am to put to her about her 'generous instincts.' Nothing

like having a proper understanding about these matters. 'I have ten thousand pounds, you may take me or leave me,' is what I should like her to say; but there's no getting a woman to be business-like. However, to-morrow evening, I will try and bring her to book."

I am afraid the colonel was not altogether sorry for having given his friend so much disquiet. He was annoyed with him with respect to Ella, partly on her account, and partly on his own; he considered her in every way the commissary's superior, but especially so in a social point of view, as being his, the colonel's niece; and he was proportionately sensitive—after the manner of his kind—about his own female belongings, as he was callous with respect to those of other men. He had the sagacity to make a good guess as to why the commissary had invited Ella to Woolwich; namely, that she might throw the ægis of her own "position" over Miss de Horsingham; though as for there being any reciprocity in the matter, such as his friend had hinted to Gracie, it had never entered into his mind. On the contrary, although he was by no means ignorant that Ella's reputation had suffered in local circles from the stories afloat concerning the deception used at her marriage, the commissary's roof was, in his opinion, by no means one adapted for the relacquering process. If she had been invited to the commandant's, instead of to patronise the commandant's governess, perhaps to be mixed up in some future scandal concerning her, that would have been quite another matter; but as it was, Ella's coming to Woolwich—especially, too, without her husband—was a mistake, and he was by no means pleased with the man who had counselled it. The colonel, notwithstanding that he resented the contempt of others for the commissary, did in fact himself secretly despise him; their companionship was, upon his side, one of convenience only; and when this is the case, a quarrel is very easily picked with the inferior party. It was well, therefore, for the host, albeit unconscious of his danger, that he now moved an adjournment to the ladies, whom they found deep in a confidential talk, on the sofa with a background of mother-of-pearl.

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DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK II. THE CONFESSION OF DORIS.
CHAPTER V. MONSIEUR RIEL.

HAD I been indiscreet? Could I have done otherwise than I did?

I might, of course, have withheld my name. So far, I had been needlessly unreserved, perhaps. But surely something was due to his frankness, not less than to his kindness. And I confess that I had been won by what seemed to me the simplicity and the sincerity of his manner.

No doubt, he was not entitled to address me, and consequently he should have been rebuked by the surprise and severity of my bearing towards him. But how could I repel services that were so agreeably proffered? The circumstances of the case were unusual. It was not to be judged by ordinary or general rules. M. Riel was a foreigner, and an artist. He perhaps judged that his profession entitled him to dispense with ceremony in relation to a young art-student, as he might reasonably deem me. And he might not be well versed in our English etiquettes and conventionalities. And, above all, he had really assisted me. I could not judge him severely, nor could I blame myself. Indeed, I looked back with pleasure upon my meeting with M. Riel. It was something in the nature of an adventure, and my life for a long time past had been very unadventurous, uninteresting, monotonous. It had been as a dull, shadowed, sluggish stream. A pebble in the way, the pettiest of incidents, had now stirred and rippled it, and

sent it flowing on with a sparkle about its wavelets—the brighter, and the better, for the interruption.

But I spoke to no one of M. Riel. It was my secret—almost the first secret I had ever possessed. I feared lest it should be judged expedient to terminate my studies at the National Gallery.

Mr. Leveridge inspected my copy of the *Gevartius*.

"There is real improvement, Doris," he said, complimenting me. "My child, we shall make a painter of you. There are the touches of an artist in this drawing."

I did not—I could not—tell him that this improvement was due to the interposition of M. Riel. Yet I felt ashamed of my silence. If Mr. Leveridge had looked at me, he would have seen that my cheeks were very red. But he was busily contemplating the drawing.

I was glad to be able to return my *Gevartius* to its place in my portfolio. I did not touch it again. I feared to lose the benefit of M. Riel's handiwork. And I felt a wish to keep it as he had left it, for his sake—as a sort of memento of my converse with him in the gallery. Yet doing this, I was very sensible of its folly, and I reproached myself for investing a commonplace and trivial occurrence with an air of romance and sentiment. I knew that I should have been the first to ridicule and condemn any other girl, who had done as I was doing.

For what was M. Riel to me? Nothing, or only a handsome foreigner who had been civil and obliging to me, but whom I might never meet again. For I have omitted to state that he was handsome—very handsome—and, in a woman's eyes, that is perhaps a matter of some import-

him, but, with a humane eye to the comfort of the prisoners, the court ruled otherwise.

Their ears may not be attuned to music, but, like the rest of their countrymen, the Virginians of Nevada like to have them tickled with tall talk, and the managers of their centennial rejoicings were careful to provide the indispensable poem and oration. The gentleman responsible for the latter had evidently profited by old father Taylor's advice to a speaker: "Get yourself chock full of your subject, and then knock the bung out, and let the ideas flow." He opened thus: "Mr. President and countrymen. I beg you to realise the sublime grandeur of this moment of time. Centuries clasp hands in our immediate presence. Time seals at this holy moment, as an accomplished fact, the grand experiment of our fathers. We who have carried in security the ark of the covenant of our fathers' faith, above the reach of the mad waves of foreign intrigue and domestic commotion, down to the eternal shores of the irrevocable past, now press with our firmer footsteps the golden coast of a new century of time. Time now stretches forth his hand to reverse the glass and shift the sands of centuries, and at this moment our gaze rests upon the beauteous dreamland of the future, radiant with the rainbow hues of peaceful promise, and behind us stretches far away the grand highway of our national progress. It winds amidst sweet valleys, and by silvery streams, each step of its course honoured by the deeds of heroes, and sanctified by the graves of martyrs. At its commencement point still gleam the beacons of our faith, flashing from the turrets of the temple of truth. In the soft light of their glow we behold the lilies of enduring love nodding in sweet holiness by the last resting-places of the just, and hiding with their merciful shadows the graves of the erring. Fame sounds her wildest trump of joy to-day. Hope spreads her proudest banner on the sky, and Faith inscribes anew thereon the maxims of Liberty: Man is capable of self-government. All men are free and equal!" An American writer, lamenting the lack of great authors in America, finds consolation in the fact that his country can boast ten orators to England's one. In the States, "distinguished speakers" are as common as remarkable men. A member of Congress who followed Mr. Cattlin's advice, and kept his mouth shut, would have

a bad time of it if he sought re-election. If he is unequal to speech-making, he must not let his constituents know it; and, thanks to the absurd privilege he enjoys of having a speech inserted in the official report before it has been delivered in the House, it is not difficult for a silent member to deceive his friends at home. When Bill Sloan, "a twelve-hundred-dollar Treasury clerk," was asked if he knew Judge Allen, who had made such a capital speech on the public expenditure, he replied: "Know him, yes, to my sorrow. I came to Washington with him after his election. The judge had a soft place. He was assigned a place on one or two committees, but never attended, his time being spent at a second-rate tavern playing euchre, at which he is an adept. One day he called upon me, and said: 'Bill, I am getting letters from my people, demanding I shall speak on the question of the acquisition of California. You must get me out of the scrape, by writing me a speech. Do it in splendid style, and I'll give you three hundred dollars.' At the end of a week he got the speech. Did he deliver it in the House? Not a bit of it. During the rush of business one day, he obtained permission to have his speech printed. Every day brought him congratulatory letters. He came to me, chatted over old times, and then the critter said: 'Bill, do you play euchre?' 'Occasionally.' 'Well, I owe you three hundred dollars, and will play you three straight games, whether it shall be doubled or wiped out.' The speech-making debt was wiped out. Now, you were talking about that national expenditure speech of his; that, my boy, is mine. The judge owes me three hundred dollars for it. He wants to euchre me out of the money, but I have told him to pay up, or I'll let all his constituents know the history of these speeches. I fancy he'll pay."

Strange are the exhibitions sometimes provided for the delectation of the American playgoer. An actor and actress were lately "linked in matrimonial manacles," before an admiring audience at a Toledo theatre, and the first marriage ever solemnized—well, that is scarcely the word—let us say, contracted, at Dearwood, took place on the boards of the theatre there, at the conclusion of the first piece. The curtain rose and discovered the members of the company ranged on each side of the stage; the centre being occupied by Mrs. McKelvey, attired in elegant evening

costume, and Mr. Morgan, "jauntily attired," as became a bridegroom. Judge Kingdell officiated with grace and dignity, and then, "omitting the kiss, shook the hands of the pair, and the curtain fell." People who show such little respect for the holy state have no notion of taking one another for better or worse, till death doth them part, and naturally expect to be enabled to dissolve partnership when they grow tired of each other's company. It is true the law differs in different states; but that matters little, since lawyers advertise their readiness and ability to procure divorce, quietly, anywhere—"no pay till divorced;" and their services seem to be in demand, especially among the ladies. Of six wives who obtained divorces the same day in a Nevada circuit court, one was set free on account of her husband's cruelty; one by reason of his intemperance; and four because their worse halves "failed to provide." Wives disinclined to proceed to extremities, take the milder course of securing a licence to trade on their own responsibility. One lady sets forth in her petition for that privilege that her husband, being of a speculative, venturesome disposition, has lost all his means by unfortunate speculations and extravagances; but as he treats her well, excepting as regards finding means to support her and the children, she does not desire to be parted from him, but wishes to trade on her own account, and conduct a millinery and dress-making establishment, and a dry goods and liquor business, upon a cash capital of sixteen hundred dollars. Mrs. Irene Chatterton, advertising her intention of applying for a licence, shows even less fear of having too many irons in the fire, for she announces that she purposes buying and selling real estate and mining stocks, keeping a boarding-house, a boarding-school, and a fancy store, carrying on the millinery business, and trading in hardware. Mrs. Beckstoft, of Virginia, Nevada, appears to have divorced herself without troubling the lawyers at all, for her deserted spouse advertises: "To whom it may concern. My wife, Arabella Beckstoft, having left my bed and board, I hereby give notice, that if any other man will take charge of her, away from the aforesaid b. and b., I will cheerfully bear one half of all reasonable expenses for her maintenance, and will consider that I have a very good joke on Snyder."

The last sentence is a bit of slang, of which there is plenty in the mining states. At a meeting of an anti-slang club organised by the young ladies of San Francisco, one of the members, making use of the expression "awfully nice," and gently reminded that she was talking slang, retorted: "I wouldn't say anything if I were you; you told Sallie Sproggins, just now, to pull down her basque!" "No I didn't. Sallie will say I didn't; she won't go back on me!" Here the president intervened, by enquiring what was the object of the society? "To discourage slang," cried a dozen voices. "Kerect," said the president, "go on with the funeral!" Then a member rose to say she had been fined, but hadn't the stamps with her, but would settle, in the sweet by-and-by. "All right," said the president, "pay when you have the ducats." A young lady wished to know if a member could call her beau "just old splendid?" "You bet she can't," was the decision. Whereupon the querist moved that Miranda Pew come down with the dust, for having paid her lover the said compliment. This roused Miranda to remark: "If my beau was such an old hairpin as your fellow is, I wouldn't say it." The quarrel spread, spite of the president entreating her fair friends to shoot the chinning; and the meeting broke up in disorder to a chorus of mixed phrases, such as "Dry up!" "Nice blackberry you are!" "Hire a hall!" A Californian reporter relates a story of an old man who got out of a railway-car, "to spin round on his own personal curvature;" and a Californian authoress claims favourable consideration for her book on the plea that she has never dead-headed. What she means we learn from a paragraph headed, "Dead-heading in Nevada," telling how, upon the arrival of a train at Virginia-station, an Indian left it, entered a shed, stripped off his leggings, moccasins, and other aboriginal belongings, and put on the garb of civilisation. He then took a bottle of water out of his bundle, wet a handkerchief, and wiping his face with it, became a white man who had stolen a free ride from Remo; it being customary to allow Indians a free ride, providing they sat on the platform.

Reading a centennial oration, one might, indeed, suppose that Americans were a happy band of brothers, anxious to make their land the wonder and envy of the world; but, alas, their political orators and political writers have laboured in

vain, if they have not convinced us that one half their countrymen are traitors and the other half thieves; and that, whatever may be the upshot of the fierce contest of 1876, the presidential chair will be occupied by a thorough-paced scoundrel. Abuse is the one weapon of political warfare. One of the best written of New York journals complained that there was a great deal too little honest discussion of principle, and a great deal too much disgusting personal abuse, and declared it was foolish to deny it, and unpatriotic not to try and better it; and then immediately proceeded to accuse one of the presidential candidates of taking a false oath for the purpose of defrauding the Treasury, and call him the political agent of public robbers, "neither a wise man, a humane man, or a honest man." Perhaps the accused consoled himself with the reflection that men of greater fame than himself had cheated Uncle Sam of his dues. Washington Irving's name figures on the official list of defaulters respecting public moneys, his account as minister to Spain showing an unpaid balance of three cents; while a general, still serving his country, is its debtor for a third of that sum. In the same record Great Britain, on account of some transactions prior to the war of 1812, remains indebted to the United States to the tune of three dollars—a debt that might be wiped off in consideration of the United States Treasury having one of the three millions of the Alabama indemnity still to the good, although it has been distributed so liberally that, in New Bedford alone, two hundred houses have been built by seamen with their share of the plunder. Forty years ago the Clockmaker vowed: "The English are the boys for tradin' with; they shell out their cash like a sheaf of wheat in frosty weather." And his countrymen have golden reasons for endorsing the sentiment with a "That's so!"

BURIED.

We stand upon the churchyard sod and gaze
 Into the grave of our beloved dead;
 We hear the solemn words of prayer and praise;
 We mark the yew-trees waving overhead;
 We see the sunshine flicker on the grass—
 The green grass of the graves—and daisies white;
 Adown the lane the village children pass,
 And shyly pause to watch the holy rite.
 Deep in the earth upon the coffin-lid,
 Lies the last gift despairing love could make,
 White, scented blossoms, that must soon be hid
 With all we lo. ed, from eyes and hearts that ache.
 Love, strong as life, was powerless to save;
 We can but strew fresh flowers upon the grave.

Yet in this grave, tear-moistened and new-made,
 Where we must leave the happiness of years,
 May not a worthier sacrifice be laid
 Than even our fairest flowers or wildest tears?
 If we should bury with the pure white bloom,
 A cherished folly or a secret sin,
 It might make holier the silent tomb,
 Deepen the peace the dead lies folded in.
 Oh, mute, cold grave! that doth receive our lost,
 And with our lost the offerings of our love,
 Take these things also; we do count the cost,
 And God in heaven doth, looking down, approve.
 Sleep, darling, sleep; pray God that dies with thee
 Which might have parted us eternally!

WEIGHED IN THE BALANCES.

DAME BRITANNIA—under whose image on our coins the fair Stewart's portrait has been handed down to posterity—when she can spare time from ruling the waves and other congenial pursuits, gives much attention to the delicate scales found in the uppermost storey of that proverbial hive of industry, Somerset House. These favourite scales of Dame Britannia are so daintily made that they weigh not in ounces or drachms but in milligrammes; the balance rests on a razor-edge and will weigh a hair. Over them preside two gentlemen well-known in the scientific world, Mr. Bell and Mr. Richard Bannister, who with their assistant chernubs sit up aloft, and watch over the dark ways and vain tricks of those who seek to get the weather-gage of Dame Britannia, her revenue cutters, her offices of Excise and Customs. For Britannia, sometimes rash in spending money, is—perhaps on that very account—a mighty shrewd hand at collecting it. On the distiller, the rectifier, the tobaccoist, she lays her hand by no means lightly. She pokes her helmeted head into huge distilleries, and those more modest establishments wherein the noble peasant produces his potheen. With equally impatient foot she kicks at great tobacco manufactories and petty long-shore shops, where lurk negrohead and cavendish innocent of the government label. She flashes her mighty shield in the eyes of great exporting brewers, and plunges her trident into the maltster's cistern. Beneath her ægis she has for some few years past nourished the skilful chemist who, when she has made her captures, cuts up and dissects them, boils them, distils them, burns them, puts them literally and metaphorically under the microscope, and weighs them in impartial and unconscious balances.

It is some five-and-thirty years since Britannia first called in the chemist to her

aid. At that period the dame was a sorely defrauded and injured individual. Her sons treated her as if she were a mother-in-law. They rode rough-shod over her Customs and made light of her Excise. They laughed at the penalty of "Exchequering," and smoked annually hundreds of tons of tobacco which had never paid duty to the goddess. The treacherous waves over which she imagined she ruled helped largely to cheat her of her dues. Between the great ships, English and foreign, which sailed into the Thames and the long, low shore, plied countless boats all engaged in the highly-amusing and remunerative sport of smuggling. Tobacco in bales and in barrels, in sacks and packages, was whisked ashore in swift wherries and innocent-looking lighters, and found a home everywhere. English manufacturers, that is to say, those who were not in league with Will Watch, rebelled against this state of things. Their patriotism was outraged, their pockets were emptied, and they rose in defence of their rights as Britons. They pointed out that they were undersold and ruined by cheap smuggled goods, and demanded that the stringent rule of the Excise should be relaxed in their favour. Their prayer was heard, and they were allowed to use materials to aid the manufacture of tobacco other than the leaves of trees and plants. Dock, burdock, lettuce, cabbage, and—the latest improvement of all—rhubarb, were still forbidden; but for a while other ancillary substances were allowed. Minds sharpened by keen commercial competition were quick to perceive that while tobacco cost as much as three shillings and fourpence or fivepence duty paid, Will Watch might be successfully competed with by increasing the weight of the legitimate articles by the addition of molasses, liquorice, and other cheap articles. It is a well-known fact that the original weight of silk can be, and is, enormously increased by the addition of black dye—that it can be made by the dyer to turn any required weight. By parity of reasoning tobacco manufacturers arrived at the conclusion that sixty per cent. of liquorice or molasses, worked up with their tobacco, would give them a chance of fighting against the smuggler and making a profit. It happened as they expected, but Britannia's watchful eye soon perceived that the loss to her revenue by smuggling—though severe enough—was a small matter compared with that caused by the loss to the Excise by aug-

mentation or adulteration—whichever the reader pleases. On looking over her accounts Britannia saw that the importation of tobacco was falling off by millions of pounds per annum; the previous Act of Parliament was repealed and a new one passed, and the use of all substances prohibited except those essential to the manufacture of tobacco—to wit, oil and water. It is quite obvious that, so long as this Act was faithfully observed, the customer could protect himself against adulteration by the evidence of his senses, but it was soon found that extreme vigilance was necessary to protect the public against liquories and molasses, without counting the leaves of the shrubs and plants before-mentioned. Hence the chemical department of the Internal Revenue, which speedily disclosed that the list of adulterants for cut tobacco was of hideous length. Sugar and molasses were largely used, and occasionally gum, starch, liquorice, catechu, common salt, nitrate of potash, alum, Epsom salts, yellow ochre, green copperas, peat moss, oatmeal, malt commings, chicory, and the leaves of coltsfoot, endive, rhubarb, oak, elm, plane; and in some fancy tobaccos of lavender and mugwort. This ghastly list of adulterants was published in the official reports, but exercised not the slightest influence as a deterrent. The British smoker was just then developing that love for the weed which, among the classes pretending to some degree of culture, has partly taken the place of the worship of Bacchus. I cannot guess what the spirit of the author of the "Counterblast to Tobacco" would say to the astounding and continued increase of its consumption. No doubt the stupendous smuggling of thirty or forty years ago caused the "weight of tobacco cleared for consumption in the United Kingdom" to be very much less than the weight actually consumed; but admitting that smuggling has been somewhat reduced since 1841, the figures of to-day are astonishing enough. The registered consumption in 1841 was twenty-three millions, ninety-six thousand, two hundred and eighty-one pounds, or thirteen ounces and three-quarters per head of population, including every age and sex; while the last accounts made up record the amazing total of forty-nine millions, fifty-one thousand, eight hundred and thirty pounds; or one pound seven ounces and a half per head; the increase since 1869 being no less than one ounce and three-quarters per head. Women, children, and non-smokers being

deducted, these figures would swell to a very high average.

Britannia's balances then were first set to work in order to protect her pocket rather than the health of her children, for it is only of late that she has exhibited any solicitude as to the coats of their stomachs. Tobacco was, and is, a great difficulty; the high duty on an article of small intrinsic value offering an invincible temptation to Will Watch the land lubber, as well as to the seagoing representative of the Watch family. It would be difficult to pay a visit to the laboratory at Somerset House without finding there various samples of tobacco more or less—generally more—saturated with sugar, molasses, or liquorice. English makers grumbled so persistently about the competition of foreign-made and smuggled cavendish and negrohead, that Britannia again took pity upon them, and now allows them to manufacture these confessedly sweetened tobaccos “in bond,” that is to say, in a workshop under her own shield; that the increase of weight from the added sweetness may be well and duly calculated, and the clever housewife paid her proper percentage thereon; but awkward cases are perpetually turning up of tobacco, not labelled as it should be with her image and superscription, but quite in the rough, and saturated with liquorice—and—and other things. Britannia has little mercy on delinquents, and fines them severely, but not more than they can afford to pay, if they have carried on the trade undiscovered for a little while.

Beer, according to the Italian librettist, the source of the Englishman's haughtiness, gives much employment to Britannia's chemists. The malt-tax requires for its collection an army of supervisors and assistants, who lead the by no means free and independent maltster a terrible life. When barley is “malting” it increases in bulk, and almost endless measurements must be gone through before the duty, which amounts altogether to about two shillings and eightpence halfpenny per bushel, can be properly levied. This is rather a matter for the exciseman than the chemist and botanist, but there are complications which demand the assistance of the expert. A maltster occasionally malts a batch of bad barley—unsaleable in its finished condition—and then asks Britannia for a “drawback;” that is to say, he wants to be recouped in the amount of his duty. Now, as two shillings

and eightpence halfpenny per bushel represent a considerable profit on barley, it is, of course, worth while for a fraudulent maltster to “ring in” a quantity of unmalted grain, and claim his drawback thereon. Wherefore, his so-called malt is cautiously sampled and investigated before he is allowed his deduction, and the condemned malt must be mixed and ground up with linseed, to make sure that it cannot be used in any way for the manufacture of beer, but can serve only as food for cattle. A similar rule prevails as regards tobacco in the Customs Department. Leaf tobacco includes in its weight a considerable proportion of the “mid-rib” or backbone of the leaf; the removal of which leaves it in the condition of “strip.” Now, except in the case of “bird's-eye,” the eyes in which are composed of transverse sections of midrib, this rib is entirely useless. Tobacco manufacturers demand a drawback on the useless midrib, and their claim is allowed, but the said ribs must be ground to powder and sent out of the country before the drawback is allowed. Britannia will not permit midribs, like damaged tobacco, to be burnt in the Queen's Tobacco-pipe, but insists on their export—hence the enormous amount of “other snuffs” in distinction to the fancy sorts exported annually. I don't know what is done with this “other snuff,” at which the poorest civilised snuff-taker would turn up his nose. Hundreds of thousands of pounds of it are exported annually, but whither does it go? To Africa, to the Islands of the Southern Sea, or to the bottom of the British Channel? Or is it, mayhap, “run in” again by W. W. or some of his friends, to the end that another drawback may be got out of it? Verily I know not; but this much is certain, that Britannia's chemists look very sharply indeed at the samples of drawback snuff submitted to them, lest it should have been augmented by foreign substances which would be cheap at three shillings and twopence per pound—the duty on unmanufactured tobacco.

Beer for export—or rather the drawback claimed on the malt employed in its manufacture—requires much nicety in its adjustment, and gave the late Mr. George Phillips and his successors no little trouble before they arrived at their present method. Under the ancient plan, beers for export were divided into two-classes—strong and

mild; the higher drawback being, of course, allowed on the former. The sole test was the palate of the examining officer, who, after tasting the beer, decided whether it was strong or mild, and in accordance with the declaration. An idea may be formed of the value of this test from the melancholy fact that, whereas the active, intelligent, and expert officers employed in testing beers for export only detected, in the last year of the old system, one per cent. of incorrect declarations, the analyst discovered seventy per cent. in the following year. Under the new plan, the brewer declares the specific gravity and other particulars concerning his batch of beer for export, and all these points are carefully checked by an ingenious process of analysis, by which the quantity of malt extract remaining in the beer, and the amount which has been converted into alcohol and acetic acid, are ascertained, and the bulk of malt originally employed is accurately arrived at.

There are no difficulties with the export brewers now. Such discrepancies as occur between the government chemists and those employed by the brewers are very trifling, and point the moral, that human nature is very honest when kept so. The last remark may appear cynical, but a visit to the laboratory of the Inland Revenue Department is not calculated to inspire faith in the honour and disinterestedness of mankind. One thing appears certain, that indirect taxation by means of Customs or Excise is productive of an enormous amount of rascality. While pepper was subject to a heavy duty, adulteration was practised on a gigantic scale. Out of one hundred and forty-six samples examined in 1844, no fewer than one hundred and twenty-two were adulterated with rice, linseed-meal, chillies, the husks of red and white mustard, and a mixture "known in the trade" as P.D., and containing most of the articles mentioned. It will be understood at once that powdered rice and linseed-meal would lower the pungency of the pepper, which was restored by the addition of powdered chillies.

The almost complete suppression of illicit distillation has turned ingenious minds towards other methods of getting the better of Britannia's lawful dues. The article known familiarly as spirits of wine is largely used in various arts and manufactures, and was formerly manufactured mainly in private stills. When it was employed as a solvent for certain gums in the

manufacture of varnish and other materials, the duty represented an immense proportion of the entire cost. Ten shillings duty on an article which costs about one shilling and ninepence to produce is a tempting bait, and it was hardly denied that very little of the spirits of wine used in commerce paid excise. To get rid of this scandal and loss to the revenue, distillers were allowed drawback on spirits vitiated in bond to such extent that they became impossible for drinking purposes. After some experiments, it was decided that the debasement should be accomplished by means of wood naphtha—that the spirit should be "methylated." In the language of chemists, spirits of wine is "ethylic" alcohol, depending for its character on the presence of "ethyl"; while wood naphtha—the spirit produced by the perfect combustion of wood—is called "methylic" alcohol, from the presence of "methyl." The peculiar nauseousness of this form of alcohol suggested its employment for debasing spirits of wine, and it was agreed that the addition of one part of it to nine of the latter would be sufficient for the protection of the revenue. This operation has ever since been performed in bond, and the cheapness of methylated spirit has proved a sore blow to the illicit distiller. Finding his own trade knocked on the head, this ingenious individual has since tried his hand on methylated spirit, and has been within an ace of getting rid of the methyl, and producing a drinkable fluid. One thing is certain, that among a certain community in the East-end of London, large quantities of methylated spirit—more or less successfully cleansed—have been and are, drunk daily. It is also well-known that sweet spirit of nitre, and other pharmacopœial preparations, can be made from the debased alcohol now so largely sold.

The protection of Britannia's pocket, as practised by Messrs. Bell and Bannister, is not entirely confined to exciseable articles. Samples of medical and other stores supplied to various departments, such as the Admiralty, the Board of Trade and the India Office, are duly tested and weighed in the balances at Somerset House. One of the most important of these articles is the lime and lemon-juice which, according to the Merchant Shipping Act, all vessels voyaging in certain latitudes are obliged to carry with them for the use of poor Jack. It was at first sorely against the grain that Jack took his rations

of lime-juice on board Britannia's war-ships, but the success of the "physic" was so complete that its use has been made compulsory in the Mercantile Marine. Not only must lime or lemon juice be carried aboard ship, but juice up to a certain standard of strength—i.e., containing the proper percentage of citric acid—and free from adulterants of all kinds. In some years there is great scarcity of lemon-juice sufficiently good for ships' stores. In 1874, for instance, large quantities of foreign-squeezed lemon-juice were presented for examination, but a considerable proportion had to be rejected, on account of its having been below the standard. English lemon-squeezers—the persons, not the wooden instruments known by that name—are now so well aware that only good juice will be accepted, that they seldom present inferior or diluted juice for examination, but the foreign "squeezer" has not yet seen the error of his ways. Foreign-squeezed juice is prepared with too much or too little care, as it frequently contains common salt, and is sometimes diluted with water. In the year just cited, foreign juices as compared with home-squeezed were rejected in the proportion of nearly two to one; yet, although more than twenty-three thousand gallons were rejected, no member of the trade questioned the accuracy of Britannia's balances—a feat that members of other trades are by no means unapt to perform. When the juice has passed through its trial successfully, it is, in the bonded warehouses, fortified with fifteen per cent. of proof spirit in order that it may "keep," and is then bottled, sealed, labelled, and sent on board to insure poor Jack against scurvy. To the end that he may have his lime-juice fresh and fresh, it is enacted that in no case shall it be in bottles containing more than two gallons, and in ships carrying twenty persons or fewer, quart bottles only are permitted. The Merchant Shipping Act of 1867 expressly commands that the master of the ship "shall serve it out himself, or cause it to be served out, at the rate of an ounce per day for each member of the crew so soon as they have been at sea for ten days"; and the medical officers "recommend" that, when the juice is served out, it should be "mixed in the proportion of one fluid ounce of lime-juice and one ounce of sugar to not less than half-a-pint, and not more than a pint, of water, and that the mixture should be served out in sufficient quantity

to each mess or watch at the dinner-hour, so that it may be obtained by the crew in time to drink during their meal." To these properly stringent commands and recommendations is added a humorous aspiration of the medical officers that "Lime and lemon juice should be regarded, not as a medicine, but as a necessary article of ordinary diet." Perhaps, if the "fortification" were applied with a more liberal hand, Jack might in time be brought to consider the dose "ordinary diet," but fifteen per cent. of rum to an ounce of lemon-juice and half-a-pint of water makes a mixture, wholesome, no doubt, but "nothing like grog."

About four years ago a permanent arrangement was made with the India Office respecting the examination, at the Inland Revenue Laboratory, of samples for that department. This additional work has enormously increased the variety of the substances examined. Many hundreds of samples are sent yearly from the India Office, consisting of food—canned meats and soups, pickles, and preserves; disinfectants, clothing, numerous oils, lubricants, soaps, wax, varnishes, pigments, salts; metals, such as copper, and other articles, among which medicines occupy a prominent place. Since the practice of analysing these articles has been adopted there has been a marked improvement in their quality—a matter, in some cases, of literally vital importance. The medicines largely used in tropical climates should, on account of the difficulty of procuring them abroad, be of the best possible description and highest degree of purity. It was, however, soon discovered that cinchona bark was supplied of very inferior quality, being almost useless as a medicine; and, in one or two instances, the bark examined was not cinchona bark at all. Of the cinchona alkaloids—quinine and its congeners—some of the most expensive were adulterated with those of little commercial or medicinal value; and, in several cases, one kind was substituted for another, the "substituted article being invariably of less value than the one it was made to represent." Paint, too, is very liable to sophistication, the favourite adulterants being chalk and sulphate of baryta—substances which seriously affect the durability and the value of the paints. Beeswax, again, was found to be adulterated with tallow. A large quantity of wine was far below the quality of the sample submitted for tender, and one

sample of beer examined for the Admiralty was thirty per cent. lower in commercial value than it purported to be. These experiences naturally induced Britannia to inquire into the quality of other articles supplied for the use of her soldiers, sailors, and scribes. Ink and sealing-wax were examined; and in one parcel of the latter was discovered forty-one per cent. of earthy matter over the contract sample. Even paper has been analysed at the Government laboratory; and in one case supplied a vivid illustration of the great advantage of chemical analysis, in determining the commercial value of different commodities, as compared with the opinion of ordinary experts. The Post Office authorities having called attention to the insufficient strength of the stamped newspaper wrappers supplied by the Board of Inland Revenue, the contractor was requested to submit a sample of paper of equal weight, but of greater strength than the old. The extra price of the new paper, when calculated on the year's supply, amounted to a considerable sum, and, as it appeared excessive, the paper was submitted to practised paper examiners, who pronounced it not worth the additional cost. At the suggestion of the Secretary the papers were weighed in Britannia's balances. The result showed that the paper in use contained fifteen per cent. of earthy matter, which added to its weight but not to its strength. In the new paper this was replaced by fifteen per cent. of fibre. A microscopical examination of the two papers further showed, that the fibrous material of the new was longer and stronger than that of the old paper. This chemical and microscopical examination of the paper thus brought the practical expert to naught, and proved that the demand for extra price was amply justified by improved quality.

Britannia's own scales are not infrequently employed in deciding—according to the Sale of Food and Drugs Act, 1875—when learned doctors disagree. It must not by this be imagined that the Government Laboratory is exactly a chemical Court of Appeal or Analytical House of Lords. Its opinions will not override those of other analysts, except in some cases of conflicting evidence. For instance, the analyst employed by the prosecution against a baker who has, or has not, put alum in his bread—a very delicate point to settle—against the milkman whose sky-blue is alleged to be watered, and the cheesemonger whose butter is of suspicious origin, may hold that the baker has un-

doubtedly employed alum, that the milkman has sold stuff containing not nearly the invariable proportion of solid matter; that the cheesemonger has largely intermingled not only water, but cart-grease and other horrors, with his best Dorset; while the rival analyst employed for the defence may hold that the bread contains no more than the proportion of phosphate of alumina natural to wheaten flour; that there is not much really known about milk and its solids; that the presence of foreign fats in butter cannot be detected by any analytical process known. Under these circumstances it is competent to either plaintiff or defendant to demand that samples shall be sent to Somerset House and analysed there, in order to assist the magistrate in arriving at a conclusion. It is not to be wondered at that difficult problems should now and then crop up under the Act just referred to. The possible quantity of alum existing in bread must be proved from the residue of alumina after the bread is burnt, and the slightest error in estimating this substance will cause a stupendous blunder in calculating the alum. Just now, opinions are divided as to the effect on the human frame of the exceedingly minute quantity of copper found in certain kinds of pickles, as well as on the butter and milk questions; on both of which the opinion of Britannia's own analysts is confronted by the great authority of Professor Wanklyn.

Leaving these scientific luminaries to settle disputed points among themselves, I depart from the Strand Laboratory not a little impressed by the nature of the work done there, and the practical teaching afforded to the students from the Surveying Department. During the last year more than fourteen thousand samples were examined by the skilful and industrious gentlemen whose mission it is to see that Britannia's grog is not watered, her pickles not poisoned, and her pocket not picked; in very plain English, to keep her children, at least in their dealings with her, up to a certain standard of honesty.

STANDING ARMIES.

THE enormous armaments under which every considerable state in continental Europe groans, and which press, like a nightmare, on the labouring breast of commerce, are quite of modern growth. It is quite true that the kings of an earlier day

hankered after standing armies; but it is equally true that those costly luxuries were beyond their reach. The great Asiatic monarchies—Assyria, Babylon, Persia—had not a single professional soldier on the muster-roll. Nor had highly-organised Egypt so much as a brigade or a battalion of men whose trade was war. The strength of these oriental empires lay in a martial nobility, ever ready to fight on horseback or in chariots, after the fashion of Homeric heroes, and in a submissive population, prompt to exchange hoe and sickle for spear and sling.

The gigantic force which Xerxes led forth from Asia for the conquest of Greece, and of that Europe, of which Greece was then the unconscious bulwark, might have been fitly described in the words of Prince Bismarck's caustic retort. It was no army, but a multitude of armed persons, alien to one another in speech, and garb, and colour, undrilled and undisciplined, and driven, like a mob of oxen, under the advancing standards of the Great King. Nor were their Grecian foes, then or long after, anything higher than a militia, in which archer, and slinger, and horseman, and heavy-armed hoplite, did temporary duty at the call, less of national, than of municipal danger.

Philip and his mighty son brought together the first real army that the world had ever seen. The Macedonian conquerors were the first to evoke the soldier-spirit, which has never since quite died out, and to teach the lesson by which Napoleon largely profited, that the recruits of vanquished or tributary countries, well officered and welded into a mass, will fight the battles of the victor. The Silver Spears of Alexander appear as the legitimate prototypes of the Old Guard, and the motley host which sacked Persepolis of that which forced its road to Moscow. Professional soldiery did not, however, always assert its superiority. It was a civilian army of Romans, fresh from the plough and from the workshop, which overthrew the Epirotes and chased Pyrrhus to his ships.

The wonderful campaigns of Hannibal, his rapid marches, the quick blows which he struck, and the peril of Rome, first suggested to the countrymen of Fabius and Scipio that the soldier, paid and trained to fight, was after all a defter instrument of strife than the wild warrior or even the armed citizen. The Carthaginian invader had won his triumphs at the head of foreign hirelings. Rome could

raise, for long terms of service, cohorts more manageable than those of which the ranks were filled by recruits of Roman blood. What was true of the Western, was still more true of the Eastern empire. Strange, in an ethnological point of view, was the medley of races drawn together under the Labarum of the rich emperor of Constantinople; Turk, and Hun, and Avar, German and Dacian, fighting side by side for a day's pay.

The great difficulty of the mediæval kings of Europe was to be kings in deed as well as in name. The feudal system, with all its bad points, had its good ones. The spears that a monarch summoned to war could be pointed against him in peace, when the flatterers that ever beset a royal ear suggested some illegal subsidy or benevolence. Had the Parliament of England relaxed its hold upon the national purse-strings—had the States General of France, or the Cortes of Spain, been earlier coaxed or cudgelled into compliance with the costly whims of a greedy and luxurious court—the fairest and most enlightened lands of Europe might have become what Persia is now, mere milch kine to a hard master.

Our own Richard of the Lion Heart, the French-speaking, crusading, poet-king—who never came to England but to get money by the sale of a score of charters, by ransom, capitulation, anything—valued his hired soldiers, Brabanters for the most part, far above his English six-weeks' army, good for a march and a battle, but hard to keep together at the end of its forty days. Magnificent Edward the Third ruined himself—and drained every friendly purse from Chester and London to Bruges and Florence—for the sake of the Dugald Dalgetties of every nationality, drawn together beneath the pennon of St. George, to reap the golden grain of the harvest that the island bowmen had sown at Poitiers and Cressy.

During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, soldiery was decidedly a very comfortable and lucrative trade, a business that brought in large profits and quick returns, which procured personal consideration for those engaged in it, and which, strangest of all, was attended with little risk. Any "tall fellow" of strong limbs, shapely presence, and bold brow, might, if he were but "a proper man of his hands," and adroit in military exercise, earn eight times the wages of a skilled mechanic. If he could buy, beg, or steal a horse, and

ride it when he had got it, his fortune was, indeed, made. At one time the hire of a cavalry soldier, armed and mounted at his own cost, ranged, in France at least, so extravagantly high, that, with regard to the actual value of money, it may be roughly calculated as within a few francs of what a commandant or major, with a battalion under his orders, now receives.

There was not much danger in the warfare of that period, to which belongs that wonderful Lombard battle, in which but two lives were lost, and those by the suffocation of unhorsed champions, smothered by the weight of their armour before the victors had time to unlance and unbrace them, and restore them to fresh air and daylight. The aim of the mercenaries was to capture, not to kill. They fought to screw the ransom out of beaten opponents, and had a fellow-feeling for one another, just as professional cricketers have now. They might, as a matter of business, cut a throat now and then, when wrong-headed prisoners proved too obstinate; and of course the wretched peasantry, among whom they lived at free quarters, met with scanty consideration from these well-salaried warriors.

The great source of profit to the soldier of the later middle ages was that he had a monopoly of his craft. Noble, gentle, or ungentle, he was at least a freeman, at a time when five-sixths of the population of Europe were slaves chained to the soil. He could hold up his head, speak his mind, and handle his weapon, when the half-starved tiller of the soil was afraid to call his crops or his cottage, his wife and his children, his own. And as, very gradually, the old feudal tyranny grew stiff and palsied, and lost its vigorous aggressiveness, the army of a nation became more and more national. The Thirty Years' War was indeed waged almost altogether by mercenary troops, beneath the Imperial or the Swedish standard; but Cromwell's unequalled army, highly paid, strictly disciplined, and regarded with envious admiration by every court and prince on both sides of the Alps, was thoroughly English.

In the Merry Monarch's days, English discipline, English efficiency, had ceased to be a proverb on the Continent. Incomparably the best-drilled army in Europe was that of the Grand Turk. No infantry were such practised children of the camp as were the sultan's famous Janissaries; no artillery was so formidable as his. The hugest army was that of the Most Catholic

sovereign of Spain and of the Indies, but it was already in a sorry condition, ill fed and ill led. The finest was that which Richelieu and Mazarin had begun to raise, and to which Louvois put the finishing touches, for the absolute king of France—an army that caused many an uneasy moment to the great grandfathers of our own great grandsires here in England.

The principle on which Louvois went to work was a straightforward and a simple one. He proposed to himself to keep on foot a great army that should be cheap, manageable, and yet capable of bearing down by weight of numbers any ordinary foe. The common soldier, the mere pawn on the chessboard, was to be nourished, clad, and lodged at as low a rate as might be. Let him eat his fill, and replenish his mug with wine, when he got into an enemy's country, and could live at the cost of the king's enemies—in the Palatinate, say, or in Holland or Spain—but in France itself the lean grenadier was tightly held in hand, whatever indulgence might be shown to officers of noble birth. A few privileged corps—the Guards, the Musketeers Black and Gray, the hired Swiss, were ready to do the cream of the fighting. And, as for the mere commonalty, their feudal seigneurs might be trusted to force or cajole a sufficiency of recruits to join the ranks.

Frederick the Great, if he followed in the footsteps of Louvois as a military organiser, far surpassed his master in the art of extracting from a reluctant soldiery the maximum of obedience at the minimum of cost. With cane and scourge, with blackball and pipeclay, with bullet and black-hole for the more refractory, he succeeded in making regiments and brigades that hated him, and that were largely composed of bought or kidnapped men, as steady as so many automatons under fire. It was better, the poor wretches felt, to front the shot, than to wince beneath the rattan of the adjutant and the sergeant's strap; and so they fought, and bled, and were driven off like hounds, after the quarry was dead, to kennel again.

Our own military system, as was natural under a German dynasty, and under such captains-general as H.R.H. Culloden Cumberland, and the martial bishop of Osnaburg, was laid down on German lines. The soldier's gleaming little tin of soup, the soldier's lump of boiled beef, are legacies of the two earliest Georges. Because the Hanoverian private dined

thus, the British private, albeit not of a soup-eating nation, and growling ever at the outlandish fashion of his food, conformed to the Hanoverian pattern. Wolfe's recently published letters have told us, that his opinion of the stocked and powdered soldiers of his own time was very much that enounced by Dr. Johnson in *The Rambler*. Sergeant Kite and Ensign Plume had purveyed the men from the dregs of the population. They had been lashed and hustled into a creditable appearance on parade. Some of them, like the Foot Guards at Lincelles, could fight like heroes, and good-humoured, merciful heroes withal. But of the rest competent judges wrote down that their valour was "precarious," their honesty hazy, and their morality imperfect.

In one respect the British army beat all others, and that was the important question of its daily meals. It was very much more regularly paid, and much more sedulously fed—thanks to the liberal votes of a lavish Parliament!—than were the white-coats of France, or the yellow-coats of Spain. Army contractors at Blenheim or Fontenoy were not impeccable men, nor were Paymasters to the Forces quite clean-handed; but, compared with foreign intendants and commissaries, they were as mirrors of integrity. There was much desertion, much drunkenness, and, in spite of the cruel floggings then in vogue, an extraordinary amount of petty theft among the men. At the sight of a red-coat, prudent cottagers snatched away the linen from the garden hedge, and gathered in the scared poultry, as though grenadiers had been gipsies. The soldier, off duty, was reckoned as a scamp, light-fingered and light-heeled.

A good deal of undeserved, or, at least, exaggerated praise, has been heaped upon the ragged levies of the French Revolutionary Government, the men of *Jemmappes*. The Austrians in Flanders, led by crabbed formalists, whose one tactical idea was to turn an enemy's flank, certainly were worsted by the shoeless, active boys who paid no regard to tradition. But when English and Russian brigades came crowding into Flanders, the contest was one between striplings and grown men. The real Grand Army—the victors of Lodi, of the Pyramids, of Austerlitz—was so largely leavened by the tough old soldiers of the ancient régime, that even the untiring brain and iron will of Napoleon could never bring together its equal. The

conquerors of Wagram and Jena did not trample down resistance as the builders of the Boulogne imperial column had done. The mixed host that left its bones in Russian snow was far inferior to that which had menaced England, and those which bore the brunt from Leipsic to Montmartre were mainly made up of boys.

The "tax of blood," so called—the grinding conscription which weighs upon all continental Europe, and which only the friendly seven-league sea enables us to avoid—produces, everywhere, imposing numerical results, and, in Germany, Russia, Spain, and Turkey, an abundance of broad-chested and hardy young men. In France and Belgium the age of twenty is maintained by the recruiting department at the sacrifice of a heavy percentage of those nominally liable to serve; while the sons of well-to-do families slip or wriggle, eel-like, through the complaisant meshes of the net, and leave behind a residuum over which experienced officers shake their heads.

Nothing, on paper, or in a country where, as in Prussia, rule and fact go hand-in-hand, can work more smoothly than a conscription. Nothing, in practice, and where interest and wealth throw their weight into the scales, is more easy to evade. The strapping younger son of *M. le Marquis* is exempted, on the plea of weak eyes or diseased lungs, of which nobody ever heard before, from the actual handling of a coarse musket, and goes into the reserved list of infirm attendants. The young viscount is made honorary clerk to the Hay and Straw Office. *M. Chose*, the manufacturer of Lyons, has influence enough to pitchfork his son and heir into the staff of a territorial general yet to be appointed. Scores of rich young fellows make believe to do duty as cavalry volunteers, and clink and swagger along the asphalt of the boulevards, while some plebeian comrade, stimulated by five-franc pieces and eleemosynary sips of brandy, grooms their horses and burnishes their accoutrements. So little have eighty years of experience reconciled the South of France peasantry to the conscription, that to lurk for months in hiding-holes among the rocks, or to lodge for half a year in a Spanish farm, is the alternative of thousands of "refractories."

A standing army is, in truth, a monster hard to construct, difficult to keep in working order, and all but impossible to

renew, when war has drained it of its strength, and taken the bloom from its brave appearance. A generation has elapsed since 1854, and yet our own Foot Guards do not loom as large as the scarlet-coated giants who went out to the Crimea; Austrian colonels of crack regiments mourn the stately front-rank men laid low at Sadowa; and the wide-chested "substitutes" no longer lend an imposing aspect to the head of a French column. Such as they are, however, the vast aggregate of European armies represents a colossal pecuniary sacrifice, and a waste of time and a tax upon the bone and sinew of a nation, not over pleasant to contemplate.

Very large armies gravitate towards war, as if to justify the fact of their existence. It is felt sometimes, even by peaceable persons, as if it were better to employ the great destroying engine, once for all, than continually to oil, and polish, and regild the costly piece of murderous mechanism. To despotic monarchs a fine army is only too apt to appear in the light of a toy, or rather, perhaps, of a keen-edged tool, wherewith to cut and carve the dominions of a feeble neighbour. And there have been occasions when the dangerous machine, like a sorcerer's fiend, clamouring to be employed, has become self-acting, as did the Sikh Khalsa and the plundering army of the Constable de Bourbon, and has forced its unwilling rulers into war.

WHAT HE COST HER.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MASSINGERD," "AT HER MERCY,"
"HALVES," &c.

CHAPTER. XXXIV. THE COMMISSARY GROWS CONFIDENTIAL.

THE colonel's remark had a certain "lilt" with it, and as Ella looked through the window and saw "the gallant commissary coming through the square," she could not but acknowledge there was a romantic air about him, that suggested melody; it was not the poetry of motion, for his walk was strictly, not to say stiffly, military; but his bearing was triumphant, his colour high—even to his cheek-bones—and he swung his cane in quite a light and airy manner. In his button-hole was a bouquet, as large as ladies are wont to carry, and on his enormous hands were stretched a pair of lavender gloves. It was unusual to see the commissary out of uniform, he avoided mufti "upon principle," he said, and be-

cause "in his time officers were not ashamed of their profession," though his enemies affirmed that motives of economy, and a well-grounded apprehension of being taken for a colour-sergeant out on a holiday had something to do with it; but to behold him thus attired was a portent.

"Does he not look every inch like an expectant bridegroom?" observed the colonel grinning.

"He looks more dreadful than ever, I think," said Ella with a little shiver.

Then her host came in, and welcomed her to his "humble roof" with what was for him "effusion;" and Gracie came down, and was embraced with every demonstration of paternal affection. The colonel, from motives of delicacy, and also because he was upon the brink of a burst of laughter, stood apart at the window whistling softly to himself, "Froggy would a-wooing go."

"I hope you found what has been done in your old home a pleasant surprise, Gracie?" said her father.

"Everything looks very nice and pretty, papa; and it was very thoughtful and kind of you to put those charming flowers in our rooms."

"Eh, flowers, what flowers? Oh, I daresay that was Gertrude's doings—I mean Miss de Horsingham's. That lady has been most kind, my dear. I consulted her in your absence about the little arrangements in preparation for your return, and for the reception of our honoured guest here, Mrs. Landon; and I think she has acquitted herself to admiration."

"Everything is very nice, I am sure," said Ella, seeing that her friend was at a loss for words. "I am very sorry, however, to have been the cause of having kept Gracie from home so long, and from executing her own proper functions as the mistress of your house."

"Oh, don't mention it," returned the commissary coolly; "Miss de Horsingham has a great taste for embellishment."

"I hope that does not extend to her conversation," said Ella quietly.

The colonel, at the window, exploded into a roar.

"There's a boy's hat just fallen in the mud," he said in explanation, as the commissary drew himself up with an offended air.

"Miss de Horsingham is the soul of truth, Mrs. Landon," observed her host.

"Then I should very much like to see her," returned Ella blandly.

"Your wish shall be gratified to-morrow. Gracie shall ask her to dinner."

"But, papa, it is so soon," faltered Gracie. She knew Miss de Horsingham, and rather liked her; but she had been by no means an intimate friend of the family; indeed they had had none such but Ella. At the same time, if this lady had been kind to her father, she felt it was her duty to acknowledge it; and as to his having any matrimonial views, they never entered into her head; mainly, perhaps, because she concluded that Miss de Horsingham must needs be without dowry.

"Your objection would hold good, with respect to any stranger," said the commissary loftily. "Indeed, Gracie, I think you might give me credit for understanding that much. But Miss de Horsingham has shown an interest in me and mine which merits a peculiar acknowledgment. The colonel here is, of course, in an exceptional position. He will make one, I hope, of our little party."

"I'll come like a shot," said the colonel cheerily.

"But that does not prevent Ella's uncle from dining here to-day also, papa," said Gracie. The commissary was not generally lavish of his hospitality, and it was a stroke of policy for straightforward Gracie quite Machiavellian, which thus reminded her father of the relationship between the colonel and their guest.

"Of course not; of course he'll dine to-day—if he'll take us in the rough, and trust to pot-luck."

This observation must have been dictated by something of the pride that apes humility; for in fact, very extraordinary preparations had been made on Ella's behalf; and the avant-courier of them had already stolen into the room from the kitchen.

"I have an old campaigner's nose, commissary," said the colonel, alluding to this grateful odour, "and I will risk the pot-luck."

The dinner, in fact, was as great a success as circumstances permitted it to be; the two gentlemen were in high good-humour; and Ella, as usual, endeavoured to forget her own sad thoughts in lively conversation with her uncle. Gracie could not banish from her mind that memory which seemed to have died out so soon from her father's, and his mirth jarred upon her ears. She knew that her mother had expected to be forgotten by him; that she had felt her own death not only as the

laying down of a heavy burthen, but as releasing others from their share of it; yet the thought: "Does she see, does she hear, is she sensible of this too swift erasure of the past?" would intrude on her. Nevertheless, she did her best to play the hostess.

"Now, I call this very nice and comfortable," said the commissary, when the ladies had withdrawn, and the whisky and hot water made their appearance. "Here's to your niece's health, colonel!"

"You are very good," said the colonel, a little stiffly. He did not dislike the other's companionship for himself, but he resented the idea of any familiarity upon his part with Ella. He had said no more than the truth, when he had expressed his wish that she had come to his own roof, rather than to that of the commissary; and he thought it rather a liberty in him to have invited her.

"We will have a good bout of it this evening," observed his host, "since to-morrow we shall be rather on our p's and q's I suppose."

"Why?" inquired the colonel.

"Well, Miss de Horsingham will be here, you know."

"I don't see why we should be more on our p's and q's, as you call it, because of the commandant's governess, than now, with my niece and your daughter in the house."

"I only meant that she would be more of a stranger," said the commissary hastily.

"Well, I suppose that won't be the case very long, will it?" observed the other.

He spoke indifferently, almost contemptuously, and looked up so impudently at his companion, that some men, having a glass of steaming grog in their hand, might have been induced to throw the contents in his face. But the commissary, who was drinking, merely winked significantly over the top of his tumbler, and when he had set it down replied:

"You have hit it, colonel."

"It was impossible to miss it," returned the other. "One can't miss a barn-door flying. I am not speaking of the lady of course"—for the commissary's face had suddenly turned to that yellow-red which, in his signal-book, betokened fury—"but of your intentions regarding her. They are honourable, I have no doubt, but they are deuced open."

"I mean them to be so."

"Wanted to compromise the lady, eh?"

Quite right," said the colonel, stirring his glass, and looking at his boots.

The glance that his companion bestowed on him, was a concentration of malignity and passion; but it was unseen, or, at all events, unheeded. He went on in a philosophic tone:

"All is fair in love and war, they say, and to secure a woman there is nothing like the plan you have adopted; but it has this disadvantage, that it cuts both ways. You are as much bound to her, as she is to you, and though there is no brother in the case, the commandant himself would think it his duty, remember, to see the lady righted."

"Of course he would, should there be occasion; but I have quite made up my mind upon the matter."

"You really mean to marry this woman, then?"

"I really mean to marry this lady," said the commissary with a significant stress.

"Well, you know your own business best, no doubt; but I should have thought that a man like you—a warm man, a man with a good bit of savings, I suppose——"

The commissary shook his head; but smiled, nevertheless. It was a very gentle denial of the impeachment.

"I say, I should have thought, Ray, that you would have chosen a younger woman—a companion for your dear girl,' as widowers with a grown-up daughter always say, to justify their choice of a chicken."

"I should not have thought myself justified, as regards Gracie, in making choice of any young woman," said the commissary loftily, "unless she had an independence of her own."

"Which Miss de Horsingham has not, I conclude?"

"I never asked her any such question."

"Nor ever made any inquiries, I suppose?"

The commissary smiled, not so much, it seemed, in answer to the colonel's roguish look, as at something that was passing in his own mind.

"Come, tell me the truth, general."

The "general," coming as it did unexpectedly, and at the end of so many observations by no means of the conciliatory sort, was too much for even the commissary's reticence. His smile expanded to a grin, and his large face glowed with conscious pride.

"Well, I know I can trust you, colonel."

"I will be close as wax."

"And you won't—you won't take advantage of what I am about to confide in you by endeavouring to cut me out?"

"To cut you out? Gracious heavens! with the De Horsingham? Certainly not."

"Very good, that lady has ten thousand pounds, sir, in her own right."

"I don't believe it," said the colonel bluntly. "It's no good you're being put out; this is really one of those statements which a man ought to preface with: 'I would not have believed it if I had not seen it myself'—and so give his friend a loophole."

"Well, I have seen it myself," said the commissary.

"What, the money? The ten thousand pounds? Does she carry it about with her in notes? And if she does, are you sure they are not flash notes? Have you looked at the water-mark?"

The commissary held up his finger for silence, looked cautiously at the door, and then whispered in his companion's ear:

"I have been to Doctors' Commons and read her father's will: 'I give and bequeath to my only daughter Rosanna, the sum of ten thousand pounds.'"

"Perhaps she has spent it since," suggested the colonel.

It was a random shot, fired after the engagement was well-nigh over, for the speaker felt that he was beaten; but it went home.

The commissary turned a dreadful colour—his own particular, with something added—as though he were crossing the Channel on a rough day.

"How on earth should she spend it?" faltered he with sickening apprehension.

"I don't know, because I don't know her tastes," said the colonel. "But some women's are devilish expensive."

"She is economy itself," said the commissary.

"Ah, that's a bad sign; one never knows the value of money till one has lost it."

"I don't think she'd dare," muttered the commissary through his shut teeth, and looking very unlike a bridegroom. "She has never boasted of her money, it is true; but she has led me to conclude—I mean before I found it out for myself—that she has got something."

"Like somebody else," said the colonel, "eh? You will be a pair of cunning ones, you two."

To this disparaging observation, the commissary answered nothing. His com-

panion's chance suggestion had fallen on very fruitful soil, prepared for its reception by base suspicions of all human kind. He wiped his damp forehead with a huge red bandanna, and laid his bony hand upon his companion's arm.

"Look here, Juxon, we have been old friends for many a year, and know all about one another—or nearly so. You must give me a helping hand—I am not the rich man you suppose me to be. I don't want your money," he added hastily—for the colonel had drawn himself up a little, and was mechanically buttoning up his pockets—"but only your advice. You have a deuced long head of your own, and you understand womankind. It is necessary for me—absolutely necessary—that I should marry money. Now, if Miss de Horsingham hasn't got it"—the commissary looked so miserably embarrassed, and at a loss for words, that his friend took pity on him, and finished the sentence: "You would let her remain Miss de Horsingham, in short, to the end of the chapter."

"I would see her—at York," said the commissary, mentioning, however, a much more southerly spot. "It is necessary to be quite sure, my good friend, and I want your advice, as to how to make sure."

"Ask her," said the colonel bluntly. "You need not say anything about the money that has been left her, since you have made certain of that; but let the conversation turn upon extravagance, and then put the question point blank. 'Dearest Rosanna, I am afraid with your generous instincts, and your scorn of petty details, that you are one neither to look after the pence, nor take care of the pounds.' Then she will say, 'Yes, she is, because she has had a lesson;' or she will say, 'No, she isn't;' and then you will know that the money—or some of it—is gone. I don't think a woman would evade a home-thrust like that. It would afford her such a capital opportunity of confessing to a little extravagance, if she has really committed a great one, and of course you must not let her suspect that, if she has, you are off your bargain."

"I'll just write that down," said the commissary, producing his note-book; "I mean the question I am to put to her about her 'generous instincts.' Nothing

like having a proper understanding about these matters. 'I have ten thousand pounds, you may take me or leave me,' is what I should like her to say; but there's no getting a woman to be business-like. However, to-morrow evening, I will try and bring her to book."

I am afraid the colonel was not altogether sorry for having given his friend so much disquiet. He was annoyed with him with respect to Ella, partly on her account, and partly on his own; he considered her in every way the commissary's superior, but especially so in a social point of view, as being his, the colonel's niece; and he was proportionately sensitive—after the manner of his kind—about his own female belongings, as he was callous with respect to those of other men. He had the sagacity to make a good guess as to why the commissary had invited Ella to Woolwich; namely, that she might throw the ægis of her own "position" over Miss de Horsingham; though as for there being any reciprocity in the matter, such as his friend had hinted to Gracie, it had never entered into his mind. On the contrary, although he was by no means ignorant that Ella's reputation had suffered in local circles from the stories afloat concerning the deception used at her marriage, the commissary's roof was, in his opinion, by no means one adapted for the relacquering process. If she had been invited to the commandant's, instead of to patronise the commandant's governess, perhaps to be mixed up in some future scandal concerning her, that would have been quite another matter; but as it was, Ella's coming to Woolwich—especially, too, without her husband—was a mistake, and he was by no means pleased with the man who had counselled it. The colonel, notwithstanding that he resented the contempt of others for the commissary, did in fact himself secretly despise him; their companionship was, upon his side, one of convenience only; and when this is the case, a quarrel is very easily picked with the inferior party. It was well, therefore, for the host, albeit unconscious of his danger, that he now moved an adjournment to the ladies, whom they found deep in a confidential talk, on the sofa with a background of mother-of-pearl.

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